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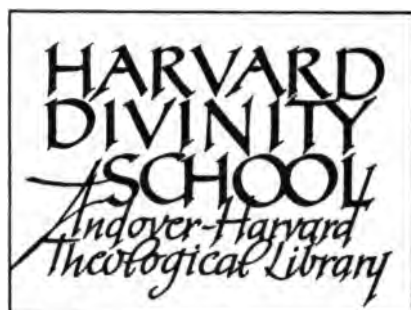
DALL. SOME GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, IN TEN LECTURES 1856

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1856A

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SOME  
GOSPEL PRINCIPLES,  
IN  
TEN LECTURES.

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BY C. H. A. DALL,

*MISSIONARY TO INDIA*

Of the American Unitarian Association.

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PUBLISHED BY THE

Unitarian Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in India.

"LIBERTY, HOLINESS, LOVE"

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## PREFATORY NOTE.

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The Ten Lectures, here thrown together, to satisfy a few friends, were hastily prepared, under pressure of various engagements, incident to the opening of a new mission. About twelve hundred copies of each had been circulated through British India, in the columns of the *Englishman* Newspaper, by the liberality of its accomplished Editor, Wm. Cobb Hurry, Esq. ; and this led to the opening of some interesting correspondence, and thence to the present form of less fugitive publication.

“ Thy hope hath reached its goal,”

“ If one way-faring soul, ”

“ Pluck healing virtue with the wholesome fruit.”

C. H. A. D.

Calcutta, April, 1856.

# UNITARIANISM

AND ITS

## PROGRESS IN AMERICA;

SHOWING

Its real and high aim to be a Free Catholic Union of  
Men in "the Simplicity which is in Christ."

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## LECTURES ON UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY.

No. 1.

*Read—Ephesians, 4 Chap. 1—14 v. v.*

SUBJECT: UNITARIANISM AND ITS PROGRESS IN  
AMERICA.

If not as a text, then as a motto allow me these words of Jesus (written in John 17-21), "That they all may be one: as Thou Father art in me and I in Thee that they also may be one in Us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me."

I saw to-day, quoted from the *London Leader* the following words, which struck me as an appropriate introduction to the subject of this evening. The writer said, under the title "Events of the Day," "There is something noble in the very simplicity of the course which King Victor Emmanuel has taken. He determined to found constitutional Government in Piedmont, and he has done so. To do it involved the necessity of standing independent of Austria; of conceding representation with free discussion in speech and printing; and independence from the dictation of Rome: hard matters these for a Catholic Prince to grant; but he has granted them and accepted the consequences. He has, in short, steadily followed the course of constitutional freedom, and he is essentially the opponent of absolute despotism."

Now, my friends, it is certain, it is only the truth, that what Victor Emmanuel is doing in political life, the Unitarian Church, if I know anything of it, is doing, or essaying to do, in the religious world.

The progress of opinion in religious matters, through all history and the world over, differs but little from the progress of thought in other matters. Nations were not always governed as they are now. We have, in religion as in politics, succeeding to the rule of the strongest, the patriarchal or papal time, then the aristocracy or episcopal rule, better than the mere dictation of one man, however patriarchal and well-meaning. Then comes monarchy and a rule less than despotism; with a people's *Bill of rights* and some representation of the laity. This seems to answer to Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, ruling by traditional creeds and articles of faith—called Protestant, but openly denying Protestant principles in *practice*, viz., the sufficiency of the Bible, and the right and duty of the individual to draw thence his own convictions as God, and reason, and wise talk and thought may guide him. I thank God that constitutional restraints have been accepted, more and more since Calvin's day, by the

Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and other creed men. I rejoice too, that since they dissented and seceded from the episcopal oligarchy (which was not long ago,) there have been found in all denominations of dissenting Protestants, *individuals* who have been better than their creed. Omitting, now, for brevity's sake, all other phases of opinion we come to the old truth, only now beginning to be realized, that the people, if allowed to read and taught to think, can constitutionally govern themselves. Men can think for themselves in religion as in business. England and America believe that only Law is King. They differ a little as to the name they give to the personal head of the state. They differ a little as to the amount of self reliance, that it is safe to allow to the masses of the people. Still, neither American nor Englishman will say that his government is other than one of absolute principles—principles everlastingly true. Not any arbitrary whim of any person called Queen or President, is law in England or America. In either country the theory of government is that of principles, not persons: constitutional principles, and not men: or of men only as they represent what is true to-day, and true for ever. It matters not whether the name be that of democrat, republican or constitutional monarchist, so long as people refuse to yield to what is merely arbitrary, and privileged and despotic, and say, "right shall rule"; "let the right go up whoever goes down."

Thus it is that the Unitarians of to-day are human liberty men: no matter what they may have said in Abraham's time, or in Paul's, or in the 6th century, (when the entire Church was proclaimed Arian, i. e. anti-trinitarian, from the Papal throne.) No matter what they may have written, even so late as Priestley's time. The Unitarians in England have been, and are, stringent (not to say radical) defenders of intellectual liberty: witness the work of F. W. Newman, a man widely read, here and at home, and I believe not a professed Unitarian. He says that "Reverence for Intellectual Freedom marks the Unitarians," and I think he is just.

I am most intimate with American Unitarians, and desire now to show what they are struggling, with more or less energy, to accomplish.

Let it then be said, once for all, that the Christian body known in America as Unitarian, desires to proclaim, (shall I call it) spiritual democracy: the right and duty of every man to search the Scriptures for himself, and be his own master in religion: be a member of Christ's Church in virtue of his acceptance of Christ's word and commandment, as he finds them in the Bible. Not as I find them, nor as you find them, but as *He* finds them. The American Uni-

farians have written on their banner from the first, the three words, "Liberty, Holiness, Love." The grand difference between them and their sister Churches is, that they do *not*, as others, set uppermost their own or any man's theological *opinions*. They have their opinions, and their opinions are dear to them, and they are glad to have others adopt them; but, when the question arises, shall we count this or that man a brother and a fellow believer with us, the answer is not, we will if he *thinks* as we do in the deep questions of theology, but, we will if he be able to accept Christ our Leader for his leader; Christ our way to God, as his only way to God and heaven. "One is your master even Christ, and all ye are brethren; if ye love one another as I have loved you;" these plain requirements of Jesus himself are made to subordinate every thing else.

A *fraternal* authority thus becomes recognized as the highest authority that Christian can exert over Christian: and the truths embodied in the Lord's prayer are creed enough for any man: such as the directly *filial* relation of every seeking soul to the one Infinite Father, imaged in Christ, whose state is righteousness, and peace and joy. Have an absolute and reverent regard to the will of that Father. Christianly toil in his service to your own perfection, and the universal establishment of right and peace and joy: God's will being done by men on earth as in God's own heart; ignorance and sin will give place everywhere, and for ever, to truth and love. Here is plain work and work enough to occupy all Christians, and all men. The learned and the unlearned, the rich and the poor, the philosopher and the day laborer can comprehend it, and work daily, hourly, for Jesus and for God. To believe this possible, under an infinite diversity of gifts, and an almost infinite variety of thought, makes one really a Unitarian: which is to say, a believer in the establishment of a holy Catholic Church, growing up in all things into Him who is the only Head, under God: and united more and more for ever, not by coincidence of opinion, but by faith in Gospel liberty of thought, in Gospel holiness of life, in Gospel love. This Love finds individual perfection, salvation, forgiveness, peace, and power only as Jesus Christ found them, in a life of faith; enduring scorn; requiting it with blessing, and even laying down his life for his friends. Nothing short of this *free catholic union* of all Christians and all men, is Christ's truth and love is the aim of the Unitarian Church.

(2.) The commencement of the last great Unitarian movement took place almost simultaneously in New England and in Old England, and is not yet a century old. I have spoken of their infancy and of the way in which they came

to their Christian name. Let me next remark upon their *training*. Fidelity to facts requires that it should be told, that this modern movement originated among educated men and scholars, among men who had the best opportunities of intellectual development. Every position, whether of wealth or penury, whether of exposure or refinement, has its peculiar advantages, and its peculiar disadvantages. Leaving every man to judge for himself of the desirableness of being born into a condition of outward prosperity and high culture, I am bound to testify that the Unitarians have much to answer for in this respect. Certain it is that modern Unitarianism had its birth among students of high truth in high places. It was the product of the deep devotedness of keen and polished minds to the study of the Scriptures. Possibly there are those who hold this to be a disadvantage. In their view "not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called." Such persons will assert that if the leading Unitarian divines have been, and are, among the leading intellects of their time (which is not far from the fact), it is so much the worse for them as a religious body. Still, it is a little singular if "much learning do make men mad," and mental culture be a doubtful blessing,—that every denomination of Christians should be as desirous as it is, in these days, to have an educated ministry; to build its theological school, and require its every preacher to be a scribe well "*instructed* into the kingdom of God." American Unitarianism first arose in Boston, and Boston and Cambridge are the chief cities of its strength to this day: than which there are few better taught cities. Those who have grown up to consider this form of faith, *the unperverted* gospel, naturally incline to look favorably on the fact that it arose there as it did. That it was early baptized in knowledge. That it resulted from conscientious and competent study of the original *records* of divine truth. That it has always been jealous, to a fault, of an ignorant or uneducated ministry. That it has been advocated by such men as the successive Presidents of the oldest, and most widely honored University on the American continent. That the best students and the most successful *writers* of history such as Everett, Prescott, Bancroft, Sparks and others, have also been Unitarians, and even Unitarian preachers.

Every body knows that *Chief Justice Story* was not only a Unitarian, but accustomed to preside at the largest meetings of the Unitarian body, at a time when he held the very highest seat in the Supreme Court of the United States. Story's works on law and equity are used in Calcutta I believe, and are *likely* to be used for years to come, wherever sound law and the English tongue may go. Those who

know that Story was a man of prayer, and of a beautifully religious life, deeply interested in the religious progress of his own country and of the world, though they may not accept his theological judgments as they do his legal ones, will at least allow that the carefully formed religious decisions, by which such men (such rare men,) live and die, are worthy of respect—if not of conscientious study.

Without pointing to England I might mention other benefactors of the race eminent as Unitarian Christians. But let us not pursue this point further. It is too notorious to need vindication, viz., that among Unitarians are found men of the purest fame, and most trusted character. Men prominent throughout the world as jurors, as moralists, as historians, as philanthropists, as statesmen, as divines and as the chosen guides of their time, by reason of their acquisitions in sound learning. Let the fact pass for what it is worth. It will at least suffice to remove the impression that the Unitarian *heresy*, if heresy it be, took its rise in *ignorance* of the Scriptures.

"But" says a hearer, "*knowledge* is not all." "The head may be right and the *heart* wrong." "The *Unity of Faith* and knowledge is what the Gospel requires of the Christian." What of the Unitarian's *faith*? What of his vital piety? What of his faith working by love? I hardly dare trust myself to answer such a question, for who can read the heart,—save God only. Regarding still the infancy of the denomination, and remembering the gospel requirement, "Show me thy faith by thy *works*;" remark, if you will, the fact that *very* early in the American history of the denomination, God raised up in it men like Henry Ware and Joseph Tuckerman; Noah Worcester and Dr. Channing. These and other men (now canonized among Unitarians) were, in their day, the leading if not the original movers of great practical reforms. They stood forward in the face of opposition and obloquy, to uplift the *inebriate*, to deliver *the poor*, to advocate the cause of *peace*, to plead for the *slave*. Worcester known as "the Apostle of Peace," gave almost the first impulse toward *organizing* the idea of *international* Christian love. Ware, a universal reformer, will long be remembered among others as a father of the Temperance Reform in America, Tuckerman originated a movement, happily combining secular and religious labors for the prevention of pauperism. Under the name of the Ministry at large, which is a ministration to the necessities of such children and others as run at large in every city, away from industrial, educational and religious opportunities. Tuckerman's work of faith and love has spread into a dozen cities on the American side the sea, and I believe into nearly



as many in England. In its very nature, like the work of Worcester and of Ware, it is a work *wholly unsectarian* in its character. This is seen by the fact that cities, where Unitarians are in a minority, are often devoting public money to the aid of *their* daily and nightly schools, and the other beneficent operations of the ministry at large. Must it not then be said, that in so far as they have been entrusted by Jehovah, with the two talents of intelligence and wealth, the Unitarians have *used* and not wholly abused them. Some of the most unexceptionable public charities in the world are indebted to the living patronage and dying legacies of Unitarians. Were it not invidious as well as needless, a catalogue of names might be given—not a few of them Unitarian merchants of Boston, who have gladly devoted their *hundreds and thousands* of dollars to public institutions, educational and reformatory, and not within the management of their own sect. (If I may be pardoned the reference) the late Lord Shaftesbury, a man of wide practical knowledge in institutions of reform, told me himself that these reform schools, asylums, &c., of which I speak, *were looked to as models*, by even English philanthropists. But enough. Called upon to show Unitarian faith by its works, I have been compelled to state the facts now given. God forbid that we should glory in them. God knows that had we laid *ten times as much* on his altar, for love of man, we should still be to *Him* unprofitable servants. We should only have done what it was our duty to do. Other denominations of Christians are wont to speak of their missions. From what has been said you perceive the direction in which, until very lately, Unitarian missions have worked. As a general rule, Unitarian charity begins at home. It finds a favorite text in the words of Isaiah, “Bring the poor that are cast out *into thine house*. Where thou seest the naked cover him, and hide not thyself *from thine own flesh*.”

It may still be urged that I have said nothing of “*vital piety*” among the Unitarians. In answer to which I have to say, that God only knows the heart. Weekday meetings for social prayer and religious conference, are known in this as well as among other denominations though they are not quite so frequent in some localities. The Sunday school, the Bible class and the teachers’ meeting are as faithfully held, and baptised in as earnest prayer, with them as with others, and as to the prayer of the closet and pillow, what man can know his brother’s habit, or knowing would publish it? Doctor Bushnell of Connecticut, a widely popular minister of the Trinitarian Orthodox Church, in a work lately published, says of his own and sister Churches—“We have some good points in which we compare favora-

bly with other Christians, and Christians of other times. But our style of piety is sadly deficient in many respects." "We (Trinitarians) hold to a piety of conquest rather than of love. A kind of *public* piety, that is strenuous and fiery on great occasions, but wants the beauty of holiness; wants constancy, singleness of aim, loveliness, purity, richness, blamelessness, and, if I may add another term, that carries by association, a thousand religious qualities, wants *domesticity* of character." "Our very theory of religion is," says Dr. Bushnell, (referring to the Trinitarian Churches) "that men are to *grow up in evil* and be dragged into the Church of God by conquest. Whereas there is a sober and rational possibility, that human society should be universally pervaded by Christian virtue." "The Baptist tells the child that nothing but sin can be expected of him, and we (Evangelical Christians) must leave the young a full fourth part of the race, the part least hardened in evil and tenderest to good, unrecognised and unprovided for (as to heart religion.) Dr. Bushnell is pleading in behalf of family religion, and what he calls Christian Nurture. Their public teaching of the young in Sunday schools—he does not deny.

He could not, as it seems to me, have set forth more clearly than he has here, the Unitarian ideal of "*vital piety*." Their desire is to make *home* the Church of childhood, and to substitute "rational Christian virtue" for that which its own advocates, tell us is a piety of conquest rather than of love. How far we are *attaining* this our ideal, who shall dare to say? I am sure no Unitarian will hold back the confession so nobly made by our Trinitarian brethren, that like theirs *our* style of piety, in practice at least, "*is sadly deficient*."

I have spoken of the Unitarian *name* of the later Unitarian movement: of God's favor towards it, in giving it generously, opportunities both of a thorough *knowledge* of his word, and the means of showing the *fruits* of an intelligent faith in works of *mercy*. It remains to speak a little more minutely of the effects of free gospel thinking of America, and conclude with the hopes and prospects in the Unitarian Church.

The rise of genuine Catholicity in America is highly interesting and instructive. The true Protestant principle seems there at last beginning to be understood. It is established by law that every man is to think his own honest thought in theology, as in any other science. While he has the *love* of truth in him, he must be thanked, not blamed, for faithfully expressing his thought. I speak now of that liberal and Catholic *feeling*, which I do not call *tolera-*

tion, for I hate the word : and can never recognise the right of one brother in a family merely to *tolerate* another. No, no. Away with a *word* beneath which lurks the old *lie* of personal domination and priestly infallibility ! It is not toleration I mean. 'Tis Catholicity ; 'tis wholeness of heart, a fraternity allowing the hearty *welcome* of an honest doubt in perfect faith, that where it is really honest, it is harmless ; honest doubt is a shade for weak eyes that is to give them strength to bear to-morrow's light. I repeat it ; the dawn of a genuine Catholicity, in that country of which I am best able to speak, America, is full of instruction to the unprejudiced. (1)—In the first place, it has so grandly *catholicised* the Papal form of Christianity, that by their own account the Church of Rome in the United States have lost one half their actual members in ten years. They have, I think, but 5,000,000 ; when they should have by emigration and natural increase alone, full 10,000,000. (2.)—Again in the Protestant Church, great "moral" questions subordinate the merely theological : questions called moral, but which have vital religion in them ; and concern the most religious needs of the time ; I mean slave emancipation, salvation of the drunkard, of the prostitute, and of all the poor and perishing, from delirium, hell and death, immediate and prospective. Such questions of *practical* Christianity are riding iron-heeled over all sectarian distinctions. There Unitarian and Trinitarian heartily co-operate. Your speaker has been welcomed into pulpits of five different denominations :—not to fight for a sect, but to plead the cause of the poor with any and all to whom God had given the power to *help the poor*. He was privileged to preside over a city mission in the Roman Catholic city of Baltimore, where he a Protestant, found in his industrial religious school, (wherein the Gospel was read and sung,) 300 Roman Catholic out of 400 pauper children taught from day to day, for 3 years by 75 teachers, representing Christians of seven different sects of Christians. Their differences of opinion did not prevent their doing good together, nor forbid their heartily joining with all who delighted in the study and practice of Christianity. (3).—Finally, the Gospel has been left to work itself free from the errors of Athanasius and of Calvin (including of course the Trinity,) and the result is what ? Why, (1) that among the pioneers of civilization in the Western United States ; among men who at first owned nothing but an axe and a Bible, and possibly a log cabin for a Church edifice, has arisen a denomination of Gospel believers, absolute deniers of the Trinity and its associated dogmas, incarnation and *vicarious* atonement : unknown for a time to the (Eastern) Unitarians, but now co-working with them in

building colleges and schools of divinity, and called "Christian Baptists," while preferring to take only the common name of Christians. While Unitarianism proper, was springing into new life among the old rich libraries of Cambridge and Boston in the far *East* of the country, the same essential doctrines were growing in the far *West*, out of the study of the Bible, dissociated, by the necessities of woods and praries and pioneering life—*dissociated* from priestly direction, the interpretation of surpliced bishops, and even from the common services of the Sunday, the preacher and the village Church. Wealth and deep study on the one hand, poverty and naked common sense on the other, found the grand trumpet tone of the mouth of Jesus to be the same: no uncertain sound, but the very voice of Paul, the chief apostle, "to us there is *but one God* the Father and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." And this great Son of Man, if ever by any servant of his, he chanced to be called a Lord or a God was so honored from the fact that he had so "loved righteousness and hated iniquity, that *His God*" and our God "had anointed him with the oil of gladness above his fellow" men. Not only has this great doctrine, of the precedence of the Father and the subjection of the Son, grown thus into the convictions of men in two quite opposite spheres of life and under different opportunities of Bible study; but did time allow I could shew that the same essential views of Gospel truth have started into new life and strength in two or three other quarters. Suffice it to say, that the "Progressive friends" or "Hicksite Quakers" are declared Anti-trinitarians, as are the Universalists, another very active body of Christians in America—a body more numerous than those designated Unitarians. Neither the Universalists, the Progressive Friends, the Christian Baptists, nor the Unitarians were knowingly instrumental in bringing each other to the simple views of Gospel truth, which they now delight to find they all hold in common. I do not say that the views of these four denominations are identical in all respects. Nor do I believe it possible that any two men should hold identically the same views of abstract truth, if they think and study for themselves. I do say, however, that without either of these, Unitarian or Anti-trinitarian sects, occupying precisely the same point in space, they are one, both in spirit and essential doctrine, i. e., what they severally believe Christ, they only master, declares to be truth deepest and highest of all that has come from Heaven to man. I speak not now of others, who seem about to join the company of these four, but resting here, I am able under the providence of God to testify, that these four are now

growing into nearer co-operation, and a closer resemblance in doctrine year by year. It is as if four men from different points, far apart, and unknown to each other, had cleared farms, and built them homes on the north, the south, the east and the west of the same mountain's base, and had unexpectedly met together at its top to build a common temple of worship to the same Infinite and only Father of them all.

The Unitarian movement in the United States is only about three quarters of a century old. Yet it is a thrifty branch of the *Christ Vine*. Young as it is, it has exerted a perceptible influence in liberalizing and leavening the older sects within reach of its spirit of freedom. Indeed other Anti-trinitarian sects have arisen, they arose as I said, almost simultaneously with it, that seem quite as earnest in the cause of spiritual freedom and doctrinal reform: although they may not yet have produced or published writings as widely influential, or as generally read, as the works of Channing, Dewey and Ware. From its originating in what might be called *refined life*, we perceive what would probably be the *temptations*, and the besetting *sins* of Unitarianism. I hold that every *denomination* of Christians, like every individual man, has peculiar exposures and besetting faults. For many years, let it be frankly said, there was in this sect a dread of *cant* in religion, and a fear of proselyting, and of social excitement, and excess; of extravagant demonstration, as seen in revivals and heard sometimes in prayer meetings: there was an apprehension, a jealousy, that is now perceived to have been unwise, and carried to an extreme. If hypocrites *can talk religion*, it should not deter Christians from religious conversation. Such was the effect, however of the reaction from the high pressure of the "New Light" Orthodoxy, which arose about a hundred years ago in the day of Whitfield, that, for a time, the Unitarians would have no prayer-meetings. They would not even print or distribute *tracts*, for fear of proselyting. They have grown wiser now. And, (as I said) *now* their conference and prayer meetings are frequent: and they are freely using all the more approved methods of religious sympathy and culture, which they think have proved of real service in any branch of the Church. They are growing in this way to feel an increasing warmth and zeal, and fellowship in the propagation of the Gospel. Men from among the masses, men *less* under the contracting, the often chilling influences of wealth and taste and conservatism, are coming forward among them to preach the simple Unity of God and the Love of Christ. A Church-of-England writer, while speaking of the Unitarians as "enemies," says of their young preachers at Meadville "The rough material of the *West* submits itself with proud

aspirations to the discipline of this seminary, and goes to work with enthusiasm to propagate what it calls and believes to be *liberal Christianity*". "They (Meadville Students) are found in all the surrounding country, acting temporarily as teachers of common schools, and not unmindful, even then, of their religious mission. They go forth "two and two" to establish Sunday schools wherever they will be received. All this, while they are yet in the Seminary; and when they go forth from its walls, no region of the great West, is too remote for their zeal."

I have thus endeavoured to show how the later Unitarian movement is passing out of an infancy of limitation, and half-work, into a youth and promise of *Catholicity* in the best sense. Like the infancy of every other denomination, its first duty was one of self-establishment upon its own views of Christian *truth*. Argument, and a work chiefly of the intellect, was then its daily bread. Hence have arisen complaints of its lack of *warmth*. These are in process of being silenced by the adoption of methods of devotional expression and of *social* religion, that (if its disciples are not unfaithful) will ere long, satisfy the yearnings of the deepest and holiest affections. This progress into a true and fervent piety, is seen to be essential, and is getting realized. The true *blood-heat* is beginning to be felt throughout the body. There is life in it, there is love, there is intelligence, there is freedom, there is a reverence for Christ as the Image of God, as the intellectual, moral, and spiritual "fullness of the Godhead" in humanity. With these elements growing by God's blessing; in true hearts, must there not be high hope for the future? If at all faithful to the promise of its youth, has not this Unitarian movement a fair prospect of justifying its name, and doing its part in the great work of *uniting* all believers on a higher platform of faith than that of Calvin? Must men not come at last to the creed of the words of Jesus? If our Lord spake truth when he said "Heaven and Earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away," must not Christians one day give up their human traditions, and count every man a brother in Christ who receives Christ's word as God's word: granting all men *freedom* to apply the word each to his own heart and life, as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith? If anything is certain, then this prominent aim of the Unitarian enterprise is sure of success. Is it not an undeniable fact that the larger half of numerical Christendom has already given up, (I do not say the doctrine of some sort of a Trinity in the Divine nature, but) the attempt to *prove* a Trinity from the *Scriptures* alone? Yes, including the Roman Catholics who loudly affirm that the Trinity is

*only* found in the *traditions* of the church : it is a fact. Connect this with the other fact that, as men come to be enlightened they *cannot but* maintain the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith. Allow this and more than half the Christian world denies the Trinity as a Bible doctrine. Hundreds of intelligent Trinitarians, moreover, are ready, now, to banish from *their common platform of faith* all unscriptural words (such as "Trinity," "Co-Eternity," "God the Son," "God the Holy Ghost :") terms which are still made shibboleths of exclusion. Thus may we soon bring to the feet of our common Lord and Master Jesus Christ, the desired answer to his last prayer : the Amen to his earnest petition for all that should love him and do the will of God. He prayed that they all should be one in spirit. These were his own blessed words. "Neither pray I for these alone but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one : as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in it ; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."







# CHRISTIAN LIBERTY ;

**Assent and Dissent ;**

SECTS OR NO SECTS.

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"LIBERTY, HOLINESS, LOVE."

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## LECTURES ON UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY.

### II.

*Read—Mathew, 5th Chap. 1—16 v. v.*

SUBJECT:—*Christian Liberty ; Assent and Dissent ; Sects or no Sects.*

The lecture of this evening will find its unity in the following proverb ; (Proverbs of Solomon 4th Chap. 18 v.) "The path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

It seems as if the thing least understood among Christians was "the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free." It may be, nay it is, probable that no man is yet good enough or wise enough to understand it. We know it but in part. We are anxious to know it better. There can be but one Liberty. God give us to know where it is, and what it is ! What nation on earth has not shed its best blood for Liberty ? And what enlightened people does not stand ready to spill, for true liberty, *ten times* the blood it has ever shed for freedom in all the past ? What tribe on earth, never so ignorant, is not ready to give up all it holds dear for Freedom. The Republics and Governments of middle and South America, —how nobly, yet how impotently, for a century or more, have they followed the war-cry "Libertad ! Libertad !"

You observe that the very last word from Buenos Ayres, is, "We have no army capable of protecting our liberties against the Indians, who have just now, on the southern frontier, defeated the Government forces ; the whole wealth of this state is at their mercy." And again they say, "We never saw things present a more ominous aspect." "The administration have no sympathies among the peasantry," (whom they have too long oppressed and virtually enslaved ; ) and the mere *idea* of the reaction makes us shudder." Such is the last news from South America. And all history, past and present, is but a record of struggles after a *redemption* which all men believe possible, but none have found ; nay which every man feels to be his right, but which very few have rightly used, even when they *thought* they had it.

Can it be true, that in the New Testament and by the word of Jesus, human deliverance, "the glorious liberty of the children of God," is found ? is given so clearly to the mind that a child may know and have it ? is palpably offered to all men, a *real estate* ? Good God can we believe it !

Friends, I, for one, believe that no man need fail of it who will deeply enter this mine of truth, the Gospel of Christ; no man who will devoutly and patiently seek, there, the solution of the world's great question. None need come back from the search, ignorant as before: none without power to say to men, "Eureka, Eureka, It is found; I have it!"

With the grand discovery of Christian Liberty, as the consummate grace of a disciplined soul; with the discovery of perfect freedom in God's true *service*, and a Christian life; comes the solution of many a practical enigma, many a fearful mystery that now darkens the world. Herein pre-eminently, wisdom's way is "a path of peace" and of power for all men. Once find out the fountain of genuine freedom in the New Testament,—once enter and see what Christ means by saying "Know the truth I bring, and this truth shall make you free;" and a thousand perplexing questions are solved.

If the Gospel be what it professes to be, namely,—full and complete salvation and perfection to every man who will take it for his life, now and henceforth; then there is no deepest question of Government or of statesmanship, that highest of sciences, that the New Testament, in principle at least, does not answer. Here is liberty, whether for the individual, the household, the state, the church or the world. I would not preach this gospel one hour longer, did I not believe that it answered fully to *every* human need, every right desire.

Since arriving in this country, hardly a question has been oftener pressed upon me, by inquirers after religious truth, than this: "If Christianity be true, why are Christians so divided about it?" "One sect no sooner affirms a truth to be taught by Jesus Christ, than another arises to deny it. What does it mean that the whole Christian Church is so divided against itself? sect fighting sect, in one eternal din of mutual contradiction?" My uniform answer is, that men do not yet perceive God's will in the matter of mental liberty, or of Assent and Dissent. Let me not arrogantly assume that I have fully found it. But, among others, give my opinion. I am led to-night by this beautiful image of truth in the proverb of Solomon. "The path of the just is as the shining light;" (the rising sun:) "It shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

These words, I think will guide us towards a happy solution of the question of Christian Liberty, and of other questions that may properly be asked, concerning the existence of sects or no sects; concerning the duty of assent, and the glory of dissent. The discourse will culminate into the

assertion of "the perfect law of Liberty." For, let it be understood that Liberty is God's *highest Law*; and a progress from glory to glory. It is "one continued *growth* of heavenward enterprise." And to mistake License for Liberty is the saddest error that befalls our race.

(1.) Liberty,—first of all then,—is freedom "to *ascend* up to our native place." Man has not the liberty of hell, but only of heaven. If he cannot

" Bravely forsake the old bulwark's protection,  
Rising to sing of new victories won ;"

let him stay where he is. Let him not desert to the enemy, but be his own freeman, in quiet self-possession. Progress, mental, moral and spiritual, is his first duty and his last. Only *progress* is deliverance from death to life. So speak Nature, History and the Bible : and all things that live are illustrations of this law. Always the seed must cast its shell ; the young plant its nascent leaves : the blossom drop its sheath ; the growing fruit, the blossom ; the ripened fruit, the husk. Or, to take the figure of the text ; in bringing God's truth, in man, to its perfection, we must have, succeeding the deep darkness of savage life, the *waning* night. Then appears the harbinger of dawn, the peep of day ; intellectual day-break, dawn, increasing steadily to sunrise ; the sun, blushing, reddening, kindling, and then full blazing on the clouds and down the mountains upon the awakening earth. In due time the "rosy-fingered morn" opens her fingers one by one, and gives at last the clear white light. Even there the illustration ceases not, but is enforced as happily as before, by every degree, minute, second, that the sun moves, from the horizon to the zenith. At the zenith only, comes the full consummation of the perfect day.

Here then is a fact. God permits us to receive his wisdom,—whether as individuals or as a race,—not at first in its perfectness, fully and absolutely. Such is not the order of His Providence. He opens his hand to us, one finger at a time.

(2.) If this be the principle, we will next apply it to the practical question, why I do not always see as a brother sees? Or rather, to *point* the application, let us use the light of this truth to confirm the faith of all sincere *dissent*. Let it move every man of us to an independence of thought in religion, not shallow, heady or wilful ; but well-considered, reverential, conscientious. In laying the grounds of an independent decision, the truth now stated prompts to a Catholic and generous dealing with all branches of the Church. All have been dissenters in their turn. None can claim exclusively, the glory of having exchanged a childish credulity

for a manly faith. No body of Christians can arrogate entirely to itself the honor of daring to think alone with God.

Each soul, and every Church—has somewhat to do, for God and man, that *none other* has to do. Therefore duty demands some conscientious departure from the precise track of a brother's thinking. 'Tis the only position of courage, of wisdom and of love. No other course can establish a living unity, a true brotherhood, or a Christian Church on earth. This is the position, this the stand taken in all the past, by prophets, apostles, confessors, and martyrs; and in surveying it, we cannot for a moment stoop from high, generous, world-embracing thoughts and hopes.

I speak not specially of our Unitarian dissent and independence, since we are but one branch of the Church; in which I include all such as heartily honor Jesus Christ. I am neither ashamed nor afraid, but glad to confess that we as truth-seekers, stand somewhat alone; that we, as a young limb of the Church-tree, feel obliged to *lean on no other*; but wave health and peace to all from our own single stem. Yet I would rather dwell on the inspiring fact of self-reliant thought existing in *all* the living branches of the tree. I invite you to consider, and bless God for, the gloriously wide *communion* of the non-conformists in Christendom. I speak therefore, *not* to the justification of a dissent in particular; nor to the praise, merely, of the upper and outer branches,—that band of denominations, who believe in progress, in liberty, and mental independence, and fearlessly lead the world's advance in Christian knowledge. I ask you now to lift up your hearts to God in honor of the successive dissent of all sects: of all who have borne in turn this, their Redeemer's cross. In the name of humanity let us thank and bless them *all*, for their *sometime* fidelity to God and man, in their *once* having taken their places with the proscribed. For their adoption of opinions not popular in their earlier day; of religious opinions that threw them at the time into the position of a despised minority, for this, the world owes all Christian sects in turn, its heartfelt thanks. By a patient fidelity to what they saw to be truth unrecognized and dishonoured, the ancient sects have earned for themselves a place in the earth: as *others* shall earn a place, in due time, if they faint not, but speak the word that God has given them to speak, with boldness and with joy!

(3) In the outset we must clearly understand the meaning of this word "dissent," that it is not dissension, but the antidote and *cure* of all dissension, among such as God, loving variety, maketh to differ. A true dissent among men answers to the spirit of consent and of uninquiring acquiescence, as manhood does to childhood. There is no necessary

disharmony in it: any more than between the infant believer in apparitions and the adult disbeliever in them, who, for love, not sectarian ambition, would convince and convert the child.

The spiritual universe is illustrated ever by the natural. We see the worlds of matter tending by one force toward a common centre, and by another, directly opposite, toward complete independency. The first, alone, would pour this universe of worlds into a central chaos in an hour. The second alone would scatter it—no man knows where. The perfect balance of these antagonist forces brings about a harmony that compels the exclamation, "an undevout astronomer is mad." *Just such forces* has God ordained in the universe of thought, of which Christ is the centre; the solar system of *humanity*. St. Paul designates the two forces as *knowledge and faith*. He declares that 'tis only by the unity of knowledge and of faith, that we move on, to our destiny; growing up in all things into perfect men in Christ. The Christianized affections are God's appointed conservative forces. The Christianized intellect is the radical force. And, there can be no true life except as the result of their just combination. The child, a creature of *loves and affections* only, is beautifully unsuspecting, yielding, all *consent*. The man, responsible for an intellect, must of necessity dissent. He must not always say "*yes*," but sometimes "*no*." All men halt in knowledge, especially in the knowledge of Christ. None of us begin to know him as we shall know him. What we *know*, we know; yet we know so little that pre-eminently in religious and Christian thinking, every grown man will claim a large independence. If we look strictly to the nature of thought, we shall see that its action is for ever *single*. To undertake to think *as another thinks*, is an end to thinking. It is refusing to think at all. Can I solve a problem in Euclid through my child's or my teacher's thinking? No. Neither can I, if I would, *think* coincidentally with him. If we would *prove* our work (as God has commanded us to "prove all things" in the Scriptures,) we must each work first alone; then afterwards, comparing our separately-obtained solutions—we may test our success by our coincidence. We recognise our attainment of truth by our unity; a unity altogether free—and impossible to be attained by antecedent compromise; nay, certainly destroyed, by our pre-determination to accept it.

God has given man the power of thought to individualize him: so that like his Infinite father, man might have *life in himself*. Of true living, thought is the centre-flying force: love, the centre seeking; and only the resultant of the two is salvation: i. e., a balanced and divine life. The god-com-



manded exercise of *Christian thought*, leading a man or a Church to independent conclusions, I call *Dissent*; setting it forth as the necessary antecedent and indispensable condition of a living unity in the Church and family of God, regenerate humanity.

Thus defined—you will at once perceive that the history of *truth in all its branches* is a history of dissent. All the martyrs to science, as well as the great benefactors of the religious world, have been determined *seceders* from much that was *held to be true* in their generation. The right path, the path of the just actor and thinker, has been, is, and ever shall be, as the rising light that shineth over and beyond the present darkness, more and more unto the perfect day. Our present concern is not with the leaders of the hosts of science, with the once dissenting and despised, but now honoured Socrates, Galileo, Faust, Columbus; but with the Church of God and of Christ; the Bible-martyrs for God and Christian promoters of the truth.

(1). The first book of the Bible contains Abraham's biography. And who was Abraham? Was he a receiver of the *popular faith* of those among whom he was born? No; something in Abraham's heart commanded him saying, "Get thee *out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house*, unto a land that I will shew thee; and thou shalt be a blessing." So Abraham departed, as the Lord had prompted him. We need not tax our imaginations for the praise bestowed upon Abraham by those from whom he withdrew. We will not waste our time in conjuring up the epithets that they lavished upon him, they from whom he religiously came out; they whose dogmas he felt compelled to discard. We give him honor (do we not?) for turning his back so manfully at the call of truth, even upon loved Chaldea his home, "the land of his nativity." Abraham's *faith*, has been a proverb ever since. God counted it as *righteousness*. And thereby has he taught men to *disbelieve* whatever His clear voice in the heart declares to be erroneous; no matter how many generations of their fathers have believed it true. By Abraham's *faith*, which was toward man a dissenting faith, and which threw him into a *minority of one*, God has essayed to teach the headlong world, the heaven-wide difference between a *dis-believer* and an un-believer.

(2). Moses, the author of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, five books of the Bible that are said to antedate, by some fourteen hundred years, the oldest record by another human pen; who and what was this man of God? Was Moses a dissenter from the faith in which he was educated? Yes. Moses grew up in the court of Pharaoh; pro-

bably the wisest court then on earth. His mind, (as we have read) was filled with all the wisdom of the Egyptians from a child. Yet to his everlasting honor, he broke through his false educational trammels. When he became a man, he thought deeply, prayerfully, earnestly for *himself*, putting away his childish things. Led by the God within, the same who is the God above, he discarded what he saw to be untrue in the faith that was taught him. He came out of pleasant Egypt, and led out with him a nation of men who by fidelity to his dissenting guidance became the priests and religious kings of the earth.

David and Solomon were two of these kings, and they well used the king's only absolute prerogative, that of lion-hearted independence of thought. Solomon and David fell into *no merely popular* and common-place trains of thinking. They, if ever men did, thought and spoke and acted for themselves. But the time would fail us, even to name the acknowledged leaders in religion, whom God has raised up to defend and enforce His truth; truth by the majority trodden under foot.

(3) The very name of a Prophet, what is its meaning? It designates, at the least, a man of courage and wisdom outstretching the popular vision: a man who is sufficiently surrendered to God to *see* God through a pure heart; to be a *seer* or prophetic teacher and proclaimer of light not yet dawned upon a world lying in shadows. Read the story of the Prophet Elijah. What mightier shield need a true, God-reliant soul desire, than to hold up Elijah's life of protest! To hear him say to Ahab, as the true dissenter to the opposing world, "I am not he that troubleth Israel, but thou and thy wicked house:"—or again, "I, even I *only*, remain a Prophet of the Lord, though Baal's prophets be four hundred and fifty." Magnanimous, great, Elijah! Heretic, dissenter, disbeliever, wert thou, because a believer in God, and the eternal truth! Each of the Prophets was a *denier* of much that was accepted by the mass about him. Because a believer in God, he was compelled to *deny* whatever he saw to be *not* of God. He *affirmed the truth against the world*.

Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and their fellow prophets *disbelieved* and *denounced*, (theirs was an age of denunciation, though ours I trust may not be,) they disbelieved and denounced much that had become incorporated into the Hebrew faith. They were not dissenters from the popular *practice* alone. They were not merely rebukers of the popular sin and proclaimers of approaching judgment. They were reformers in *opinion*, religious opinion. Such as those who are faithful to God in our age and in every

age are compelled to be. "How long halt ye between two opinions?" was the Prophet's cry.

(4) Pass on from these earlier and by the later prophets, to John the Baptist. What an *unmitigated* dissenter was he! To him, the very scribes and doctors of the law were a "generation of vipers." Did John the Baptist fear to stand alone? Was he a reed that could be bent by the popular breeze? Or, did he fearlessly discard position, respectability, popularity, and "the soft raiment of Herod," for the hair shirt, the desert, and the locusts and wild honey of unpraised, unpopular truth?

(5) High over all blessed forever, whence came Jesus? Out of gorgeous Jerusalem or despised Nazareth? From the palace or the manger? It is the *rejected* son of God, who says, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth!" "But now ye seek to *kill* me a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God." "*Am I become your enemy, oh World, because I tell you the truth?*" Yes, master, even so! And the servant is not above his Lord. Christ never encouraged, never approved a blind, unintelligent, unquestioning faith. He says of such of us as will not deeply weigh his words and consider his testimony, will not examine the foundations of our belief, (searching the scripture and our consciences to prove whether these things be so) "Ye fools and blind!" and worse than all "Woe unto you blind *leaders* of the blind; both falling into the ditch!" He rebukes the professed expounders of the Hebrew Law—who gave the people, for the law, *their own interpretations of the Law*—and so held them fast in the chains of a false conservatism, for hindering all progress into higher and more spiritual views. They thus denied the living God, the omnipresent teacher. "Woe unto you lawyers" he says "for ye have taken away the key of knowledge," (you keep i. e. its boundless treasures locked up from the hungry mind of man: "ye have entered not in yourselves" (he says), "and them that were entering in ye hindered!") Happy is that age which owns no class of men who bear to it the relation of those Hebrew lawyers. The Saviour (I repeat it) encouraged no faith, *that was merely traditional*: which shut its ears to the ever new voice of the *spirit* of truth; the teaching of the Infinite Father of whom Christ says "He shall lead you into all truth." The truth-loving spirit of the gospel which is God's Holy Spirit, God with us, suffers no believer—no *body* of believers, to tarry long in any one letter of doctrine. The essence of truth, the very law of her life and being, is, that she shineth on and on for ever. She cannot, will not *stay written* in

one creed, nor come to all minds in one mode of expression. Forgetting the things that are behind she reaches onward and upward for ever to those which are before. *Truth will not rest ;*

" But high she shoots through air and light,  
Above all low delay.  
Where nothing earthly bounds her flight,  
Nor shadow dims her way !"

(6). We have now glanced at the Scriptures, from Abraham to Christ, in order to *be taught* and to *teach* the true spirit of religious Liberty and Christian independence. And here (Bible). I find that an absolute reliance upon *God* requires of my soul and yours,—a strictly jealous independence of man's dictation. We may not *utterly* subordinate the soul to anything which man has said or done or written. We may submit only to *God's spirit* therein, and to what may be there taught us by the living God, through our own enlightened study, aided by the wisdom and the common sense of all intelligent men. God is not dead, neither is any *book* our God, more than any *man*. God is alive and near us. He speaks to all who listen. We simply obey the Gospel in appealing from the letter of Scripture itself, to the Spirit of Jehovah as its final interpreter. 'Tis the *Bible* which says " If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God." He gives his holy Spirit to all *that ask him*. All true souls have asked for themselves. Thus we find, in every honored receiver and promulgator of God's truth, the lofty spirit of dissent ; the spirit of *appeal* to the Omnipresent Father ; compelling the soul to turn from man to God ; to look above man, his works and creeds and organizations, through Christ and the Gospel, to the one only living and true God. The true man, like Christ himself, abides by all that he sees to be good and true in the past, because *God makes him see it* to be good and true ; because God makes him *feel* it to be his strength and life. So doing, he may use, he may be greatly blessed by another's creed ; yet he may not (without *denying God*) say that he will think no further ; or say, as the Church of the past has said, that to look beyond a human creed is sin : that to test and prove a brother's thought by that inspiration of the Almighty which giveth every man understanding, is to offend the Almighty. My friends, in accepting a Gospel which commands us to " stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free ;" to " prove all things and hold fast that which is good ;" we declare that no congregation of men may innocently bind the intellect of a majority, nor of a minority, no, nor even the mind of one man, saying to it " thus far and no farther !" No Christian man or Church may say that you or I, by taking a conscientious step, beyond their

intellectual position, or aside from it—are certainly in error : and may not be nearer than they, to the simplicity of the knowledge of God, as it is in Christ.

(7) There is no time now to glance, even glance, at the course of religious protest and independence, from the Saviour's day to our own ; though its history, in the *happy* production of a division of labor, among the many sects that now fill Christendom—illustrates, even more pointedly than what has just been said, the great law of all spiritual life *progression*. Every reader of ecclesiastical history knows the story by heart.

One can hardly read history at all, without comparing the visible Church to a tree, the body of all Christians, to an oak tree. Clearly its *heart* is now stouter and thriftier than ever, though its external form is deeply marked with, natural fissures and *healthy divisions*. We can hardly trace its first and youngest bark, that grew in Asia eighteen centuries ago. That which Greece put forth in Athens, Thessalonica, Corinth, barely holds its place. Some eighty millions, as we are told, of Greeks and Russians, still keep up, with tolerable fidelity, the early Greek Church forms. Preceded thus by Asia and by Greece, in the third place Rome appears. Rome, first christianized by the preaching of St. Paul. Not Peter, but Paul, was Christian Rome's great preacher ; the same Paul who gloried in dissent from man to God ; the same Paul whom his nation accused of the high crime of schism. And, lest we should forget it, the Providence of God has brought down their very words to us, when they said, " We have found this man a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the *sect* of Nazarenes" (the Christians.) The Apostle was no advocate, it should seem, for a unity, other than that of the spirit of truth. Since before the people he replies, " I am a heretic, I am a dissenter, I am a disbeliever of their creed. I confess, (says Paul), that after the way which they call heresy—so worship I the God of my fathers ; believing, nevertheless all that I find written, with God's spirit, in the law and the prophets."

Thus clearly was dissent the life and early strength of even the Roman branch of the church. Need it be reiterated that Paul's spirit of freedom belongs in common to the whole army of the martyrs, from the proto-martyr Stephen, stoned to death in the act of a loving, praying, angel-like dissenter ; to Servetus, burnt by the order of John Calvin, for proclaiming the simple unity of God. From Peter and John, who again and again repaired from the prison to the Temple porch, to preach to the crowd the great heresy of Christ crucified ; down to the last man faithful under

persecution for opinion's sake, to-day. The visible church, in but few of its members, is yet ready to declare an honest and true dissent to be of God ; to be man's right and duty, and God's commandment. Quite lately we heard the Greek Church calling the Church of Rome her "recreant daughter," and demanding Rome's return to *her*, the mother Church. The Czar of Russia, a self-considered Pope of Christendom, believes (according to the published words of his ministers) that "God himself will soon come to justify and avenge his only true (the Greek) Church, and heal the wound in her side made by the hands of heretics (*i. e.*, of Rome) 800 years ago." "The orthodox Church (says Russia) has never despaired of this cure !"

Brothers, let us thank God, if his truth does make us free from such hate-engendering error ; error, that is doing its work of alienation all round us ; error, in defence of which the world is even now pouring out its blood ; error which is trying to turn love and natural fraternity to hate even in the bosom of the Protestant Church ! Let us thank God that as a body of Christians, we Unitarians are privileged to take the Apostolic stand for progressive truth. Never let us forget to declare wherein we dissent from past interpretations. God help us to speak as did Peter and John, saying, "Brethren, we see in the Gospel, and hear of God in the heart, things concerning God and Christ which must be spoken, and which we are bidden to speak."

Let us be thankful too, that, from our high position, as believers in progress and a *living* God, we, without any compromise of truth, can do justice to all branches of the Church in this matter of dissent. We can sincerely thank them *all* ; for having, *once* at least, in their life time, stood up, and stood alone. Honor to the Church of Jerusalem, the noble first-born of Christ (we say.) Honor to the Church of Greece, now extended over Russia, for the early welcome it gave to hated and lowly Paul and Peter, Barnabas and Mark ! Due honor to the Church of Rome that gathered once to hear the truth of God declared by the ringleader of the *sect* of the Christians, the Nazarenes ; and when he was beheaded at Rome, built over his body that proud basilica entitled "St. Paul's without the gate." Honor to the Church of Rome, that dared, *then* at least, to dissent from heathen and Hebrew alike ; and to set up the cross ; an emblem which it still lifts high, in striking inconsistency, on every place of its worship ; the cross, which tells not of *assenting* weakness but of *dissenting* strength. Tears for her present maladies : instruction for her errors : a firm resistance to her preposterous claims for power : but respect and praise and thanks for her primitive fidelity !

"Honor, say we, to the Church of England, the Episcopal Church, the first thrifty branch growing out of, or by the side of Rome. Honor at the same time to the Protestant Reformers, and to the Lutheran and Calvinistic and other Churches that have grown out of their dissent. Honor to the dissenters from the Church of England, led by such spirits, as Knox, Wesley, Chalmers and Robert Hall. Honor to the so called Orthodox Church of America, for all she has done for the country, and is essaying to do beyond its borders, even in the south sea, and here in Hindostan; evangelizing the world according to the grace and light given of God to her.

God's blessing too upon the youthful heads of the most Liberal Sects; who, desiring to forget no lesson of the past, make it their chief duty to be found climbing upward toward the hopeful future, following after truth—that Seraph of God,

" ————— As---home she springs,  
His sunshine on her joyful way,  
His freedom on her wings!"

and believing that all Christian sects, each faithful to its mission, in defence of neglected or perverted revelation, shall one day cheer their mountain march along that path of the just—which, as the rising light, shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

The dissenters of the world have been its only THINKERS, and are ordained of God to be its only LEADERS AND GUIDES.

Finally, brothers, let each of us be sure that *self forgetting love* and *self reliant thought, these two*, are the elements of Christian manhood. Let the mind be *free* to truth, as the heart is *bound* to duty; if you would glorify God and walk with Christ, on earth and in heaven:







A UNITARIAN VIEW OF CHRIST:  
OF HIS  
RELATION TO GOD AND TO MEN.

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PUBLISHED BY THE  
Unitarian Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in India.

"LIBERTY, HOLINESS, LOVE"

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1856.

*Price—Two Annas.*



## LECTURES ON UNITARIAN CHRISTIANITY.

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GIVEN ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS, AT NO. 4, TANK  
SQUARE, BY THE REV. C. H. A. DALL.

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### III.

READ :—*John*, 18th Chap. 28—40 v., and 19th  
Chap. 1—7 v.

SUBJECT :—*A Unitarian View of Christ : of his Relation to  
God and to Men.*

In *John*, 18th Chap. 37th v., Jesus says :—"To this  
end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world,  
that I should bear witness unto the Truth. Every one  
that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto  
him what is truth?"

*My friends* ;—After what was lately said here, on the  
mental liberty and consequent diversity of opinion that  
exists among Unitarians upon all debatable questions in  
theology, you will readily understand why I do not declare  
to you the Unitarian, but only a Unitarian view of the re-  
lations of Christ to God and man. Some Unitarians  
differ as much from my views of Christ as I do from some,  
called Trinitarians. Nevertheless I believe (1) that Christ  
saves men only by the truth ; not by any favoritism or ex-  
pedient. (2) That truth is for ever and every where the  
something, impartial and immutable. (3) That Christ's re-  
lation to God is that of a Reflector of his mental and moral  
likeness, as a child is like its father. (4) That Christ's rela-  
tion to men is that of light and love to the eye and heart.  
He shows the way of truth ; and by convincing men that  
God is love,—as Christ himself is love,—wins all to a just  
life of perfect love ; here and hereafter. Thus is he the Sa-  
viour of the world ; our sufficient guide to perfectness and  
peace and Heaven.

I.—Christ saves men by the truth : not by any expedient.

We see Pilate about to put Jesus to death. An excited  
crowd is clamouring for his blood, believing him to be a rebel  
against authority, and an insulter of their temple. Led on  
their priests, there is no knowing to what extremes they  
may be driven if the object of their vengeance be not given  
up. Pilate vacillates. He would gladly release Jesus if he

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dared. A few selfish words, could Christ have spoken them, would have saved his life. Conscious of immortality, and even glad to die, Jesus had rather teach Pilate than deliver himself. Pilate hurriedly questions him as to who he is, and what he is. And Christ, pouring out the fulness of his wisdom and martyr-love into 'one sentence, replies "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." "I am a King ; —a King of truth. And as to my subjects, every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." Pilate has not been accustomed to set truth heaven-high above all things else. It was so far from being the chosen pearl of his heart, that he regards Christ as a visionary. He is disappointed. He looks at his own sword and his mailed fist and says ; "These are realities ; These I understand. A King of truth ! A Kingdom of truth ! They are moonshine." So speaks the world, —to a large extent, to-day. Thousands of nominal Christians agree with Pilate. Even bodies of men calling themselves Christian Churches, say "What is Truth ? as a Saviour of men ? Truth is nothing but a mere abstraction." They say "It is not truth that saves men from their sins,—and from the hell that follows hard on every sin. It is not love in the heart that saves a man, and makes him God's true child. It is not right thoughts and deeds,—righteousness,—that gives men peace and joy and power and likeness to God." Still Christ says, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth : and every lover of truth hears me, because I speak only what is true in itself ; and true to every man." "I say, do as you see God doing, in you and for you and all around you. That is true life, that is Heaven ; that is salvation from sin and there is no other." "How are you to interpret the Infinite God ? and his doings?" "Consider the lilies and the wheat. Read your own human nature. Ask God and he will explain himself to you. Seek as I do and you shall find God. Or, come and I, Christ, will be your interpreter ! When I call every man to be perfected—and to perfect himself in love and peace, even as our Father in heaven is perfect ; I only ask you to do what I myself have done." "I have devoted (he says) my every faculty to God's glory and my own self consecration and spiritual perfection. Do in your sphere of life as I, Jesus, have done in mine :—be not only true, but the very truth :—be not only loving, but be *love* itself, not only be virtuous but *virtue* : and so God will be in you, or, if you please, I am in you. The Kingdom, the state, of heaven is in you. It is yours forever. You are lights in the moral firmament from that time. You are blessings wherever you go. All will rise up to bless and

welcome you. You shall shine and sing—as the stars for ever and ever.” So Christ saves men by (and only by) the truth.

*He does not save men by any expedient.* Truth is for ever the same. All truth is God’s truth ; and God’s truth is not *made* by any one’s affirming or denying it,—but is only told or revealed by the speaker. All truth, (in Nature, in men, in Christ,) is in harmony ; and cannot be altered by any time or place, or man, or book, or miracle. Therefore, if Christ saves men by the truth of God, he does not save them by any purchase or sacrifice of his ; not by any special act ; not by his blood ; nor his death ; nor his merits ; nor his atonement ; nor his intercession at the right hand of God. These things are all misunderstood when viewed as expedients. Who of you that has a son, is not sent of God to be his Saviour ? Men are saved by Christ and him only,—because he only truly and fully guides them over the pit-falls and snares of sin, safely to their father’s home. Does Socrates give men any true wisdom ? Jesus and his Apostle Paul declare that as much of true, godly wisdom, as there was in Socrates, so much was there of Christ in him :—and so far is Socrates a helper of men towards faith in God : a God who is loving and patient, and faithful, like Christ Jesus. Christ’s death is the crowning act of his life :—and so is spoken of, by Paul and Peter, as if his whole life was centered in that act of divine self-surrender. By the blood of that sacrifice we are astonished and convinced and drawn to our Father. We say if love can die for men that death, and live for them that life of holy service, healing, blessing all,—comforting, teaching all,—going about, doing good as hoping for nothing again,—nothing but the joy of loving, and the smile of God—then love is divine—and we too must live that heavenly life. We too will rejoice in a love stronger than death. We will speak the truth, though we die for it. We too will bless all men, even the unthankful and the evil. We will love, even them that hate and cheat and mock us. We will, if God so order it, we will forsake father’s wealth and mother’s smile. We can leave even wife and child and house and land, as Christ did—and bear a daily cross and turn not back from the death-agony, but pray even there for our murderers “ Father forgive them ! ” All this we can do : We can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth us. By the study of the Gospel, his faith in God and his love of God become our faith and our love—and, as Paul says : we may all come by the faith and the knowledge of the son of God—to perfect manhood : and that is the full measure of the stature of Christ. As he was the fulness of the God-head, so must every true man be “ filled with all the fulness of God : ”—be full of truth, full of love, full of goodness and wis-

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dom, and so be a Son of God, as Christ was. "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all," and Christ said, truly, "I am the light of the world"—and quite as truly to his disciples in all time "Ye are the light of the world." Thus he is light and his Father is light; and they are one; and we and all men must be one in light and love even as Christ and God are one. All Christian scripture, (even of John and Paul) must yield to Christ's word; and Christ says: "To this end was I born—and for this cause came I into the world, that I should proclaim the truth to the ignorant; and every one that hears truth, hears me." Thus no expedient—nothing but truth and love can save.

II.—In the second place, truth is forever and everywhere the same.

By this, I do not mean that all men, everywhere have an equal share in the knowledge of truth. Far from it. The world lies in darkness. Light is but just dawning on it. It has more of truth now than it ever had before. Still, God, who alone is all truth,—has always waited and wanted to impart himself to men. God has made truth beautiful and desirable for ever. Nor did any man ever hate truth when he saw it. Like foolish children men have shut their eyes and refused to look at truth. They have stopped their ears and would not hear it. And so, have men hated God and his Messengers: not because they saw the truth and glory of God and his Messengers, but because they did not see and would not see it. They knew not what they did. Many have been taught lies by those who should have taught them wisdom. The blind (poor things) have been led by the blind—and both have fallen into the ditch. Not because they wished to fall, but because they did not dream of a better way, or think it possible that they could be followers of God as dear children. They do not now believe it possible. No; not even many who are called Christians. The truth is the same in all places and in all times: but man has seldom attained to it. The God of heaven has always been speaking truth to man in ten thousand ways,—in every star and flower and drop of rain. God speaks to me

"In every joy that crowns my days

In every pain I bear;"

Yet, even Christian teachers say—that voice of nature is not the winning, saving, voice of God. God speaks in the heart of every living man—one and the same truth forever and everywhere—but, alas, even Christian teachers say that voice of conscience is not the voice of God's Holy Spirit: though it is his chosen, inward witness: God's echo even to the voice of Jesus. Without it God could not be heard by man,

any more than a horse or a dog can hear and understand him. The truth that God is for ever one in all his teachings through all time—is the grand declaration of the opening page of the gospel of John. God's chief witnesses are there affirmed to be voices, manifold voices of the one only Living and True. In the beginning God spake the word : He spake to man in creation : said " Let there be light and there was light." Without which Fiat was nothing made that was made. God spake in nature from the first—and that voice was *God speaking*. But because nature's voice proved, (as man ought not to have made it) insufficient to bring him to God, God spake again. Man was greatly blessed and nobly led by the voice of nature ; but as man grew to know his own natural powers he abused them. Then God spake more earnestly to man, in the smiles of conscience and in the pangs of remorse. Men call this the voice of conscience. God speaking again : a second great manifestation of the Father. This light of conscience (St. John says) was not another God, it was the one only living and true ; this second voice or " word," is God in the heart ; God speaking through reason and the moral sense. But this proved insufficient too. We need no ghost from the grave to tell us this. We want no sadder proof of it than to see the people of this land ; this all-glorious land, sitting in darkness and the shadow of death. They have nature and conscience for their teachers. They have the best records of their best readers of nature and interpreters of conscience, in their Vedas and Upanishads. But where are the people ? Sitting in deep sorrow and despair. With few, alas how few, noble exceptions ! Truth is forever and everywhere the same : But they receive it not. They are perishing for lack of the knowledge of it. They worship—they know not what.—Since then for one so wayward and wilful as God's free child man,—God in nature is not enough : is not a Father of mercy and Hearer of prayer : since God in the moral sense (in conscience) is not enough—and even as interpreted by the Vedas—has been cast out of the thoughts of men ;—and dumb and degrading idols and unbrotherly institutions have borne men down and not lifted them up : What then ? Has God therefore forsaken the earth ? Has he left man to darkness and despair ? No ! No ! What has he done ! He has spoken once. Yes, twice, and no man regarded. He came to his own and his own received Him not. And then ;—has he ceased ? Has he said " Nature's light should have saved you and made you men ; but you would not. The light of conscience should have saved you. It was abundantly sufficient to save you. But you would not : now perish ? Now wander in darkness forever ? Now sink down to an eternal hell and rise no more ?



Has God said that? Has he even said "you shall have no more teachers! You shall have no more light? Go over the old lessons till you have learned them; for I will give you no more help—no other exhibitions of my love!"

III. My friends, bless and praise the Holy and Everlasting Father,—that he has spoken yet again. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke, in time past, unto our Fathers,—has in these last days spoken unto us by his Son;—by the human heart divine of the man Christ Jesus: He,—though nature is the brightness of God's glory, and unperturbed manhood (if we could find it) is the express image and likeness of God; He, the noblest and greatest of the children of our Father,—He, our elder brother in spiritual growth,—He, the only man that ever lived,—He, is not only lord of nature as every man is lord of nature and the brutes;—He, is not only the image of God—as every man is an image of God,—he, Jesus, is the brightness of God's glory and the express image of Him, to a degree—that makes him the Head of every man. Love is love, the same thing in God, as in man. Truth is truth,—and the same truth,—whether spoken by Christ or God or yonder child. So that Christ's likeness to God, his sonship (however "express" the portraiture) differs from Plato's likeness and sonship to God—in degree, not in kind. Christ stands among great and true men as a mountain among hills. There are many hills here, but only one mountain. The apostles call him "the first-born of many brethren:" The head man of all:—or "head of every man." The one single passage of the New Testament—wherein a servant of Christ has called him "God" is instantly qualified and guarded—by the statement that he is as a god among men, but infinitely other than the Infinite One. The words are "Thou Jesus hast loved right and hated wrong, so absolutely, as to exalt thee above thy fellows—or more exactly—"thou (Christ) hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God even thy God hath anointed thee (Christ-ed thee) with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

All truth is in harmony with all truth. The Bible to be true, must be in harmony with nature and reason and itself. Then, the quotations just made from the New Testament—must qualify,—once and forever, all the rest: all the glorious things that are said of Christ. The poet Young, speaking truly of humanity—says—as you remember

"How rich, how poor, how abject, how august,—  
How wonderful, how complicate is man:  
A worm,—a God."

Men accuse not the devout soul for so speaking. Though man be called, as to his highest and truest self and life,—a God—we are in no danger of worshipping him for the Most High. It is sad to see the zeal—(not according to knowledge)—by which the master-tone of the New Testament is shouted down. It is sad to hear Christians condemning their brother Christians—for accepting the simplest possible meaning of Christ's words for the truth;—as when (with his last departing charge) he bids all that love him remember that there is a God (the only God) to whom he looked up as much as they :—to whom he prayed us all men should pray ; and whom he worshipped as they and we should worship. These are his own unmistakeable words, " I ascend to my Father and your Father—to my God and your God." " Pray to your Father. Ask me nothing henceforth !" I know some men think to honor Christ by denying him, whenever he speaks as he does here. While I grieve that they should so deny him to his face, I know it is not their purpose to deny him. I weep over it as " a good man's sin" : while I feel, that, a far-reaching love requires the lover of God and his Christ " to testify against the evil that good men do." Christ is thus shut out of the hearts of men. I speak that I do know. One of India's best and noblest—spoke as I now speak, a quarter of a century ago. The Rajah Ram Mohun Roy declared to Dr. Marshman—in his First Appeal and Second Appeal and elaborate Third Appeal—that Christians were denying Christ to his countrymen : while he called them to the acceptance of the New Testament according to his (Unitarian) interpretation of it. Rajah Ram Mohun Roy called men to receive the precepts and parables and discourses of Jesus as a guide to peace and happiness, to God and heaven. And even to-day, there are men, not Christians, among those who are honored as guides in religion, who draw inspiration from the lips of Jesus and say privately, " Never man spake like this man," yet who confess that they do not speak of Jesus openly, and as they certainly should speak of him, but for the fact that Christians call him the Almighty God. Can we blame such men ? Trinitarian Brothers (if there be such here) you know not what you do, in thus denying your master. May God forgive you and guide you to a nearer and better understanding of his holy child Jesus !

IV. Finally—I will briefly tell it again, if I have not already sufficiently told Christ's relation to God and to men—by saying in his own words, that he saves men by the truth,—and is nothing to them if he be other than God's truth to them : the (humanly possible) wisdom and goodness of God. To this double question concerning the position of Christ, I

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would rather answer only out of his own lips. First, then I say that, as Christ looked up to his Father, Almighty and All Holy ; to God Omnipresent—Omnipotent—Omniscient ;—and then down upon himself—born of woman—tempted in all points as men are ; hungry, weary and in pain ; needing to feed his faith on God by hourly prayer—growing “ in wisdom as in stature and in favor with God and man,” from a child, and so every day of his life finding himself wiser and better than the day before :—that as Christ lifted his eyes from his own wisdom and power to Infinite Wisdom and Power and Goodness—he could not but exclaim, as he did, “ Why callest thou me good ? There is none good but One—that is God ! ” I believe Jesus said this with his whole heart, and with no double or deceitful meaning. He did it—as he did every thing else—with all his great soul : not merely to serve a purpose : not merely to rebuke a flatterer : but to express pent up aspirations, after a holiness and a power that were not yet all his own, but lay far beyond and above him,

(As, to the mountain traveller)

“ Hills mount o’er hills,

And Alps on Alps arise.”—

Christ’s relation to God, was that of a pure and holy seeker of a perfection far, far beyond ought he had that day attained. I know that passages of the New Testament are interpreted so as to make him claim equality with God in all things. They do not so speak to me. They seem warped out of their meaning and out of place to support a theory. They all, when examined, melt into thin air as arguments for Christ’s absolute equality in all things with the Father. Just as melts away that often quoted proof-text of “ I and my Father are one,” when Christ adds to it “ and ye (my disciples ) ” must be one even as I and my Father are one : i. e. one in spirit, in sympathy, in love, in life. Then Christ’s relation to God is that of an humble child to his Father. An infinite progress lay before him. And for that joy—which as the Scripture says, was set *before* him, he cheerfully endured the cross, despising the shame. Had he shrunk from the cross he would have been a faithless guide ;—accepting it as he did, he was a true martyr. He did that for which he was born and came into the world. He bore witness to the truth though he died for it. He shewed that he believed in the immortality he taught, and that he was, as he said he was, only leaving the world to go to higher work and joy in the presence of the Father. Thus opening heaven to men’s faith—even to all believers. In a word, Christ was to our Father, God,

a true son; truer than all that preceded him, and far diviner in his life than any man that has followed him. So true was he, that, while Socrates and Plato, and even Moses and Isaiah are getting to be outgrown, Christianity is in its early youth. Nations are taking more and more of christianity into their codes of law year by year, and even *international law* is beginning to be christianized. Thus if any other teacher deserve to be called a son of God, Christ Jesus should distinctly be called *the* son of God; or, rightly understood, God's only-begotten, or only son, fulfilling Peter's declaration—(which Christ so heartily approved, after asking Peter "whom do you say that I am,") "Thou art the Christ (not a Christ, like others who had a drop of the anointing wisdom of the spirit of God) but the Christ, The Anointed, *the* Son of the living God. That is Christ's highest character, ever claimed; and the gospel statement, and our Unitarian statement, of the relation of Jesus to the infinite One.

The *second* part of the final answer to our question, is all that remains. What is the relation of Christ to common men? Is he one of our common brotherhood? A man born of woman as well as we? and compassed with infirmity, like one of us? I reply. He says "Whosoever doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven—the same is my brother, my sister, my mother." Will you set aside that answer? Will you improve upon it? I will not. But is he not much more than a brother? Has he not done for us what no man ever did? Doubtless he has. No man in his senses will deny it. And if you ask me of this higher than common brotherhood, I must state it again in his own words: "Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am." I repeat that I receive all that he says concerning himself in its plainest and most obvious meaning: harmonizing, of course, the whole gospel with Christ's words. Let Christ's own words be taken first, and what his servants say of him, afterwards.

It is a most remarkable thing that Christ nowhere applies any *sacrificial* language to himself. His servants apply it to him, but he never appropriates it to himself. He sees how they gather to him, and follow him wherever he goes; and he says, "I am the good Shepherd: I know my sheep and they know me and follow me." Finding men who had been dead in selfishness and sin, coming to him and catching his spirit of love and a new life, he says "Behold, I even raise the dead and quicken them. The hour *now is* when the dead hear my voice and live." Finding, that the spirit of his life was running (as springsap rises in the limbs of a tree) into every thought and act of his apostles, his faithful twelve; Jesus says, "I am a Vine of which my father is the planter," and think of the difference between a vine and its

planter!) "I am the vine and you (John and James and Peter) are my branches." Thus he defines for us his relation to man. "Finding how some men went away full of hatred and others stayed to confess their sins and be holy and happy;—He said "I make strange differences between men: I judge them not—but the word that I speak, the truth I tell, causes a division between the righteous and the wicked—See I am become the judge of all!" He says to every wanderer from duty, "Follow me, I am the way:" to every liar, "Be as I am; I am never false, I am the truth!" to them that sit in dark despair, "come to the light, God is light. He does not hate you; he cares for you. Come to me, I give you my love, myself. I am the light of life. So he banished sin and knew it was forgiven and said "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

We might go on;—but the time now forbids us to go on, taking every word that Christ ever spoke concerning his relation to men:—and all would be found to centre in this one thought "I show you the Father." "For men to see me is as if they saw the Father, whom no man hath seen or can see." He could even say, "No man cometh to the Father but by me" *i. e.* in my way of approaching Him. Christ then, for man, is the Image of God's will: the picture of God's heart and life, at least so far as finite man need know the Infinite and Invisible. I am even ready to say that Christ is God's life written on a *perfectly* pure heart. Let me at least say what Pilate said "I find no fault in this man." I find no sin about him, though St. Luke says he did *grow in goodness*. So clearly and simply are God's love and truth there written, that any pure child may read the writing; and any one who knows what love is, may comprehend it.

To this end was Christ born, and for this cause came he into the world; that he might bear witness to the truth, *as it is in God*. He knew his mission and fulfilled it. He is perfect in his knowledge of himself, and so, perfectly able to tell what is and what ought to be in man. He is not perfect *absolutely*, as God is. None could deny *that* so strongly as he himself denies it. Yet he is a perfect and sufficient Guide in spiritual things. He instructs every man how to find and follow God; and so to be perfect after no insufficient and worldly standard, but only as the Father in Heaven is perfect. Can any one surpass that teaching? Jesus loved God with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his soul, with all his strength, and his brother man as himself. None can do more. I grant you, that men may illustrate the everlasting principles of the gospel, in new ways—ways in which Christ did not exhibit them; *i. e.* as the father of a family, or as an honorable merchant. The principles, however, are eternal.

They are the same for all men, all angels, and for God himself. They can never be outgrown. Christianity therefore is no expedient: no mere *scheme* of Redemption. It is God's truth and God's love embodied in human life, for all time. Christianity is not *a* religion—but Religion; the Absolute Religion. Christ is Christianity; and Christianity is Christ.





THE DIVINE UNITY ;  
  
ONE PERSON IN THE GODHEAD, AND NOT THREE ;  
  
THE DIVINE UNITY ABSOLUTE.

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GIVEN ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS, AT NO. 4, TANK  
SQUARE, BY THE REV. C. H. A. DALL.

## NO. IV.

Bible Readings 91st Psalm, 15th ch. John.

*Subject.*—"The Divine Unity; One person in the Godhead, and not three; The Divine Unity absolute."

For a *TEXT*, take John 20th Chapter, part of 20th Verse. (Where Jesus says) "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my father and your father, and to my God and your God."

(To which add the words of Moses) in Deut. 10 Chap. and 17th verse, "The Lord your God is God of Gods and Lord of Lords."

It is none other than Christ himself who says, "The first of all the Commandments is, Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love Him with all thy heart!" 'Tis then a commandment, and the foremost of all commandments from on high,—this plainest revelation of absolute unity in the Divine nature. Has God given you a child to love, and to educate for Him? Have you ever attempted to answer the deepest questionings of a young soul seeking its way to God? Then you know how deeply practical is the question before us. You need not be told that important results to others, as well as to yourself, hang on the decision you are to make to-night. 'Tis no light matter,—your answer to the question, whether, in coming to God we must approach him as one person or as three? whether we must believe that the Infinite Father is "God over all blessed for ever," or that a second and third person hold council with him and sit as co-equals on his throne. Beware, brother, how you impart that doctrine to a child. Attempt it, and you will at least understand that the religious life of an immortal soul is involved in your reply to its asking—whether it shall pray to One Person the Father only,—or whether it must perish everlastingly, (as the Orthodox creed declares) if it pray not, instantly and always to the Holy Trinity as the one only God. Are you ready to tell the child that it is a foul and damning sin—to confound the persons, or divide the substance of a Deity

who is three and yet not three, who is one and yet not one. Perhaps you have ceased to use the Athanasian creed. Well. But the surrender of one or another form of words avails little, while it is still taught in all Trinitarian Churches, that without a belief in the Trinity as the sole object of prayer, no man can be saved, or literally that the belief of three persons in the Godhead is "essential to salvation."

I need hardly say that a Unitarian Christian finds no such doctrine in the Scriptures. He can conscientiously declare that they present to his mind a perfect harmony without the use of any such hypothesis. I quote the language of one of the publications of the London Tract Society, that is now on distribution by several denominations in this city, and consider therefore that I speak with sufficient authority when I say that Trinitarians declare it to be an unavoidable inference, (you will remark their word "an inference") from Scripture language, "That the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are the one only, living and true God, and that there is in the divine nature or Godhead, a foundation for such a distinction as authorises the application of the personal pronouns I, thou, he, to each of these names, and requires divine attributes and honors to be ascribed to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit as well as to the Father." "This," (it says,) "is the doctrine of the Trinity. And 'tis not the doctrine of the Trinity (it says) either that there are three Supreme, independent Gods, or merely one God acting in three essentially different ways or manifestations, so that when he manifests Himself in one of these, he takes the title of Father; when he appears in a second, he calls himself Son, and when he exhibits himself in a third, he styles himself Holy Spirit; just as when a human being sustains three offices." I have quoted the words.

I remark in passing, that this view of a three-fold manifestation of Deity, pointing to God's progressive revelation of himself—as the Creator, the Saviour, the Sanctifier, contains nothing in the least offensive to Unitarians. 'Tis even cherished by individuals among them. But this we are told is no Trinity at all. The voice of the various sects that speak unitedly, through the issues of the London Tract Society, hesitates not to pronounce a modal Trinity, or Trinity of divine manifestations, to be as false to the record as is the idea of three independent Gods. The Trinity of manifestations is declared to be "no real distinction." "It falls far short (we are told) of those personal descriptions which the Bible gives to distinguish the Father, the Son and the Spirit. Nothing is a Trinity, but the acknowledgment of "three distinct persons." I am compelled also, in passing, to notice one thing in the tone of the tract before me.

Its earlier statements are made from the true ground of fraternity. It says "thus it appears according to our apprehension." Presently it takes higher ground and says, "It is difficult to conceive what other explanation can be given." Then, toward the close, the writer feels constrained to say, (and is sustained by a union of Trinitarian sects,—in saying) that "in this manner the various classes of passages which speak of our Saviour's person and attributes may be easily reconciled, *and in no other way can they be.*" (!) 'Tis really instructive to note the melancholy progress, here, of an evidently sincere Christian, from a position of true, fraternal inquiry, into one of papal infallibility. How continually are whole bodies of Christians falling into this error.

But to return. It is common to treat the great subject before us by a marshalling of texts on either side. Could we persuade men to go at first only to the words of Jesus, the inquiry would soon be put to rest. But when we open, between the lids of the Bible, more than sixty books—books of history, of sacred poetry, of proverbial wisdom, of law, of doctrine, of consolation, and find all the words of them all held to be of equal authority; we see how impossible it is for a mind, which has not made the Bible its study for many years, to settle any controverted question by the mere collocation of texts. The mind of the common and unlearned seeker of truth, naturally and properly hesitates to accept as final, a doctrine that a scholar may seem to prove, by the textual method alone. In arguing therefore for the doctrine of the undivided Unity of God—a truth that all allow and believe,—my first work will not be to establish this truth by an array of texts, but to account for the presence of what I consider the one error that mars and endangers it; an error that, if believed in, consistently, must restrain prayer, distract devotion and paralyse the heart of religion. Men are found dividing, to the popular mind at least, dividing, the Unity of the Godhead among three persons. Our children must be taught to pray always to three persons, and never to one.

Whence came this commandment? Can we account for its presence in the world? Can we tell how it entered the creed of Christians? I think we can. I believe that every man who will apply himself to understand the true origin of this teaching, may easily account for its presence. He may look it fairly in the face, detect its wholly human origin, perceive how the Bible is wrested from its true meaning to sustain it, and so set his heart to rest in perfect confidence that the way of the Gospel is a plain and open way, not hard to be understood, however hard to be obeyed.

This is why I addressed myself first to Facts, and to uni-

versally acknowledged Facts to prove the great doctrine from the defence of which the Unitarian body took its name, God's absolute Unity; a doctrine which is, strictly defended by several other denominations.

Before coming to the properly Scriptural argument, let me recal a few facts, which have the common assent of all men.—First, the need that the Trinity should be carefully *defined by a creed* outside of the Bible, is, of itself a full confession that it is not sufficiently defined within the Bible. In other words that the Bible contains no sufficient statement of it.

(2) Then, it is allowed by all that the writings of a certain school of heathen philosophers antecedent to Christianity and about the time God sent Christ into the world, do give a clear statement, to a Trinity. They give it in great fulness and particularity. Christianity went out of Palestine, (to which our Lord confined his personal ministry) into Asia, to find heathen monuments "written (as one has said) "all over with Trinities." The Hindoos, worshippers of Brama, were then Trinitarians, and are now worshippers of a Trinity in the Divine nature; the Godhead as they understand it. They worship a *Triune* God, God the creator, the preserver, the destroyer, deriving the one from the other, by a kind of birth, procession or emanation.

(3) As Christianity spread Eastward and Northward into Pagan Trinitarian Asia, so it spread Westward into Greece to find a Trinity there taught in the most spiritual school of philosophy, viz., the Platonic. The Divinity of the Greek Platonists, was also a Trinity of persons. Out of the 1st, the Supreme God come the Logos or Word, and then their third person, Psyche, Soul or Spirit. The second person of the Platonic Trinity, though said to have been generated from the first—was also declared to have been eternal or without beginning, and the third also though proceeding from the others, was likewise "eternal." Cudword's Intellectual System, a work of high (Trinitarian) authority will show, much more clearly than we have time here to state it, how plainly the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the godhead is taught in the writings of the Platonic philosophers:—how much more plainly we might add, than even its advocates allow, that it is taught in the Scriptures.

(4) Again,—Christianity not only found a Trinity of persons in the godhead, on its arrival in Asia and in Greece, but likewise in Africa. Gibbon informs us that "the theological system of Plato was taught in the celebrated school of Alexandria, in Egypt. Hebrews of a liberal spirit, invited by favor of the Ptolomies, here cultivated with diligence, and embraced with ardour, the Trinity of Plato. They are known, moreover, to have effected a union between it and the theo-

logy of Moses." And he adds, "This, perhaps was the first philosophical corruption of the Divine unity." Gibbon's authority, where 'tis purely historical—is indisputable. And thus in three directions was the doctrine of God's single personality imperilled,—as to its theological statement.

(5) Again, all Christians acknowledge that the preaching of the cross—i. e. of faith in the divine mission of a publicly executed malefactor,—was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. It cast unmeasured scorn upon the new religion and its advocates. The confessedly low birth and lower death of him whom all Christian converts must call their master and Lord, prevented thousands from becoming Christians, especially men highly educated and influential. Kings and Emperors would join the cause of Christ could but the offence of the cross be put away. Thus must an exalted theory of Christ's nature be discovered.

(6) Again—all are agreed that no nobler feeling dwells in the breast of man than reverence for true greatness. Man's heart is loyal by nature. The worship of greatness on earth, and the deification of great souls after death, is written in the history of all nations. Some still believe that the Most High sends down an incarnation of Himself into every generation. It is in perfect accordance with the purest and the best known instincts of humanity that it should deify its benefactors. So that one cannot look into the history of Asia, of Egypt, of Greece, or Rome, and not find them elevating into Godhead—their departed great and good. Thus we are compelled to ask—how these nations, and others, adopting Christianity as some of them did by edict of their Emperors and Kings; how they could have refrained from elevating Jesus to the Godhead? or, at least, been open to a corruption of Christianity that appealed to this highest developed sentiment of their nature? It seems as if nothing but a miracle could have restrained humanity from this homage. That this should have occurred in an age when Christianity was just dawning over the darkness of Paganism—was inevitable.

(7) Yet further; it is denied by none, I believe, that Irenæus, who wrote a large work on heresies only 172 years after the birth of Christ, does not reckon among heretics those who held the doctrine of the humanity of Christ, unless they asserted also that Joseph was his natural father. Even those who held that Joseph was the father of Jesus are mentioned with respect by Justin Martyr, who wrote some years before Irenæus, and is the first writer extant of the gentile Christians after the age of the Apostles. How could Justin have treated Unitarians with respect, and such extreme Unitarians too, if the Doctrine, if the Deity of Christ, or the later Doc-

trine of the Trinity, had then held the place it holds now ?

(8) Take, finally, the book of The Acts of the Apostles, in the New Testament, which reports, summarily, sixty or seventy discourses of the Apostles and earliest converts. Observe the varied methods in which this book, of truly "primitive antiquity," speaks of Christ and his mission. Here are twelve discourses of St. Peter, 1 of Stephen, 2 of Philip, 38 of Paul, 9 of Barnabas, 5 of Silas, and 2 of Apollos, and you find *not one word* of a Trinity in them all : not one mention of "God the Son," nor one of "God the Holy Ghost." We hear of "our Lord Jesus," "a man approved of God," "God's Christ," "God's Son." Stephen, who, in dying, commended his spirit to his Master's care,—a Master of whom, at the moment, he had a vision,—said with his last breath "I see Jesus the *Son of man* standing on the right hand of God." In revealing himself to Paul at his conversion,—when our risen master spoke directly to this great Apostle, did he keep back the truth ? No. And yet even then he said not "I am God," nor "God's equal," in reply to Paul's question "Who art thou Lord ?" He simply said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." So Paul went forth and preached Jesus as the Christ saying, Acts 13—16, that "of David's seed : had God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." So Paul made him, not eternal but born of David. This book of the Acts of the Apostles, is in all our homes. Read it, once again, and see what is *there* the voice of the Truly Catholic and Apostolic Church, concerning that supposed essential, and just now widely accepted, element of Christian teaching, the existence of three persons in the Godhead equal in power and glory :—persons who say to one another I, thou, he, in "the secret place of the Most High." More than one earnest seeker of the truth has had his mind relieved of all doubt concerning God's absolute Unity, by prayerful study of the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

I ask you, then, to accept no man's speculations ; no man's inference : but to plant your faith only on open, authenticated acknowledged facts. Among them, on these : 1st, that the doctrine of the Trinity is confessedly "an inference" brought to the Scriptures, to relieve them from an apparent self-contradiction ; which contradiction does not really exist. 2dly, That, while no sufficient statement of the Trinity is found by its best friends, in the Bible, (and they must go to an Athanasian Creed to get it stated,) a full and explicit statement of it *is* found in the spiritualistic forms of heathen philosophy that met early Christianity wherever it went. Asia, into which the apostles first carried Christianity out of Palestine, and not only Asia, but

the nations who received it next, namely, Greece and Egypt are *known* to have antecedently believed in a Trinity, and to have held it a sacred mystery. None can visit Asia to-day, to the Eastward of Palestine, without finding a Triune God, who is three yet one, one yet three, in their *present* pagan theology, as well as on many an unburied monument of their *past* civilization. So numerous are these testimonies, that Trinitarian scholars have even tried to bring this fact into what they consider the *service* of the Bible! tracing it to some possibly primæval revelation! 3dly. Not long after the time of Christ, when his doctrines began to force themselves upon the attention of "the mighty, the noble, the wise after the flesh," these learned converts, and among them late earnest advocates of a heathen Trinity, brought all their learning and all their so-called philosophy to bear upon the removal of the stigma, the disgrace, the ignominy, "the offence" of the cross: supposing, naturally and truly that they could thus obtain vast accessions to the outward power of the Church. Foreseeing, this evil St. Paul distinctly warned those whom he ordained (see I Tim. 6—20) to avoid these learned improvers of Christ's truth: to avoid these philosophising perverters of the gospel, and all their "science, falsely so called." 4thly. Recall the fact that the world is accustomed to cast out its benefactors while living, and to deify them when dead. 5thly. That Unitarianism was not recorded among heresies by Irenæus, nor held to be a cause of reproof or excommunication by Justin martyr; names of the highest authority and of the age succeeding that of the apostles. (6) And finally, that the *truly* apostolic age, reported to us by a companion of the Apostle Paul, St. Luke, gives us no Trinity, though recording for our study, among the Canonical and New Testament Scriptures, in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, accounts of some seventy apostolic discourses.

Men and Brethren, does any man believe that the Trinity was brought in by malice, among the other, sad corruptions of Christianity that have fastened themselves like parasitic plants, upon this live Banyan of God? Does any man believe that the Holy Trinity (as men call it) was added to the Scriptures, or is now brought to their help, from any clear purpose of evil? I trust not. Sure I am, that if we are only wise enough and true enough to take up the Ark of God, Christ's truth, from the point where the noble spirits of the past have left it; if we do as well in its defence as they did,—if we are as faithful to the progress of truth as were Wickliffe, Servetus, Calvin, Luther, and John Wesley, we shall with God's help, bring in a new and more perfect harmony of what Christ revealed; remembering that



'tis never Christ's truth that we are to improve, but always our understanding of it. 'Tis not the Gospel that is to grow, but the Church which is to grow in the knowledge of Christ's Gospel. Let our hearts be but half as strong, our worldly goods half as generously offered, our lives half as promptly exposed as those of the Christian leaders of eighteen centuries past, and by us shall God cause the light of his Christ to shine, more and more toward the perfect day. The time has come for the tri-personal theory of God's nature to give way to one more simply scriptural; viz., the doctrine of his sole Supremacy and absolute divine Unity. Comparatively of recent date, is the translation of the Bible into the vernacular tongue of any nation, even in Christendom. Later still has been the distribution of the Bible to the people at large. The delivering over of the Bible from private interpretation to the verdict of common sense is a late occurrence. The just meaning of harmonized Scripture, has but begun to be known. The art of printing is but three or four centuries old; and before this discovery, copies of the scriptures, even in a dead language were necessarily confined to the wealthy and the learned. Thus they had to be read piecemeal, to gathered congregations, but were never exposed to the scrutiny of the people. Christ spoke and preached, not only, nor chiefly, to the wealthy and the learned. He talked to the crowding poor, to ignorant publicans and sinners, and they understood him. God never intended that the learned few should stand between the mouth of Christ and the ear of the world. Neither had men, when Jesus stood among them, half the advantages of mind that are now within reach of the humblest child. Christ chose men of clear good sense, yet men unskilled in the mysteries of philosophy or of metaphysics, to interpret him to the world. By apostolic testimony, the learned few were when, as now, too apt to warp Christ's truth (given by him as bread to the hungry,) toward some darling idea, some petted notion of their own. Friends, if we can but believe our Master's words, that whosoever is not against him is for him, if we can but enlarge our hearts so as to believe every man a fellow Christian who is eager to unite with every other man in the study and practice of Christianity,—we shall soon have ground to hope for a clearer, broader, every way better, appreciation of "the simplicity which is in Christ." This Catholic and Christian attitude of all lovers of Jesus toward each other, is a principle—is *the* principle of the Unitarian movement; held to be more important than the establishment of any opinion, however dear to our hearts; and however essential we may deem it to the coming of God's kingdom, and the reign of Christ on

earth. The practical confession of the *unity of man*, we regard as the first-fruits of a belief in the doctrine of the unity and simple paternity of God. Whether we open our eyes to the fact or not, the age into which we are born is lifting a louder and clearer testimony than any that preceded it, and declaring that God is *one* and only one. Its world-wide and humanizing reforms, already begin to cry over the broad earth, "We have all one Father, even God." II. I have already stated why I have not given the first place in this discourse to the citation of texts of Scripture. 'Tis impossible on an occasion like the present, to deal with the vast burden of Scripture testimony, in a way to solve a tithe of the difficulties that exist in minds educated to read a Trinity in the Bible. Discourses based wholly upon quotations of Scripture must often send away the inquirer dissatisfied. He seems at best to have heard but one side of the argument. A preacher taking opposite views, and able to confound him by references to the original Greek or Hebrew text, which he may be incompetent to criticise, may darken council for him hopelessly. Especially if he allow himself to forget that our Lord speaks directly to the unlearned; that Jesus makes the way of salvation, and all the essentials of true faith shine out to all as clear as sunlight, through the *spirit* of any fair translation of the gospel. The life of Christ best declares his doctrine, and that, no man can misunderstand. The selection of words and sentences, away from the living facts in which Christ has set them, and by which God has given us their clearest interpretation, is always attended with danger of mistake. The most ferocious systems of oppression and wholesale iniquity that the world has ever seen—have stood for ages, and essay even now to stand, on a few amputated texts of Scripture. Great familiarity with the New Testament, accompanied by something of its own blessed temper and heavenly wisdom, these alone can keep us from being the sport and target of text-armed disputants. I have preferred to make my appeal first, through facts, denied by none;—to principles that lie deep in the heart of every honest man. To these principles as I said, I would mainly trust, believing that they will compel the truth-seeker, who may be listening to doctrines somewhat new to his ears, freshly to search the New Testament with the aid of a printed summary of textual exposition, such as a Unitarian brother may put into his hands. With these and the Bible, in the silence of his chamber, let him lay the Unitarian commentary on the one side, and the Trinitarian on the other. Heart within, God overhead, there is no fear that textual difficulties will long beleaguer him. Friends, we desire to present you this testimony! We have a strong

conviction that it will entirely satisfy you, though a few hints concerning it, is all that we can present to-night. A standard work on the Apostolicity of Trinitarianism printed in London in the year 1832, declares (to quote its own words) that the true basis of Trinitarianism "is a particular interpretation of the Scripture." "The Scripture itself (it says) decides nothing, until it be first interpreted," *i. e.* by some authority outside of the Scripture. The first four centuries of the Church, or such fragments of Church history as can be gathered there, must constitute the umpire. We dissent from all such appeals. We go to witnesses of Christ's own selection. These speak to us with clearness and authority. And the time must come when our Trinitarian brethren will join us in acknowledging their sufficiency as a rule of faith to every man, and every man's perfect freedom of opinion beyond the words of Christ. Within Bible limits also, if we take Christ's word for it, the New Testament stands entirely above the old as an authority for Christians. Again, we must divide even the New Testament into what is the Master's and what is the servants.' As, in the first and second centuries after Christ—we find the New Testament divided into two parts called the "Apostolicon" or human gospel (including the "Acts and Epistles,") and the "Evangelicon" or divine word of Jesus, the true creed of the Church given us by Christ himself through the four Evangelists. From the proper word of Christ ought every essential element of Christian doctrine to be fully established. What remains of the New Testament exhibits but a repetition of this, applied by the servants of Christ to the special need of Roman, Ephesian, Corinthian or Galatian churches or, generally, to the pressing wants of their own age. We live in a different age. Our special needs are not the same. Had the Apostles spoken to us directly, they would doubtless have made a somewhat different application to us of the truth of Christ. It is our rule, in the examination of argument built on texts of Scripture, that, if Christ himself be wholly silent concerning any thing quoted from either the Old Testament or the New—it is no essential part of a Christian's faith. Christ completed his own work. Accept this rule, which Christ himself has propounded, over and over again, and you dispose at once (I speak within limits) of ninety out of a hundred of the texts adduced to prove a Trinity of persons in the Godhead. If they suggest (as to some minds they do,) the probability of a Trinity, that probability is to be held a mere human opinion until Christ unequivocally declare that he is God and that God is three equal persons. 'Tis of subordinate authority if it is found to have no place in the essential Gospel of the words of Christ.

The method pursued in the present publications of the London Tract Society, as well as in those of the Bristol Society of the Church of England, I find to be this. Their argument is built upon the inquirer's success in finding somewhere, among the sixty six books of the whole Bible, words that seem to ascribe the same *titles, attributes, works and worship* to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. But the application of the same titles to different persons, does not make them the same in power and glory. 'Tis a principle of all just interpretation that the meaning of a word is varied by the connection in which it stands. The word Lord, for instance, is in familiar use among us in reference to men: yet, in a different connection we apply it to our Saviour, and again to His Father and our Father. A similar diversity of meaning is given in Scripture to the word "God". "Ye call them gods", says our Saviour, "by whom the Word of God came", i. e. ye give the name of Gods to Moses and the prophets. So the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, applies it in one instance, to Jesus. Addressing him as a God, he guards his readers from supposing that by this title he was elevated to an equality with the Supreme by saying, in connection with it, "therefore God even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows", and both before and afterwards, indicates that those fellows were fellow *men* by whom the word of God came viz., the great priests and prophets of the Hebrew nation. We also hear Moses, in Deuteronomy, declare "The Lord your God, is God of Gods." Thus it does not appear as our orthodox brethren have argued, that a single application, even of this title (which in our day has come to be almost exclusively applied to the Most High) makes Jesus to be the eternal God, by the use of Scripture language. The same may be said of all other titles.

Again; the ascription of the same *attributes* to the Son of God as to God himself, does not constitute them "equal in power and glory." "Searching the heart of man" is given as an instance. Christ's power of discerning the thoughts of a man is far short of the power of omniscience. To know the human heart is not to know all things. Another supposed ascription of Jehova's attributes to Jesus Christ, is his promised presence with his disciples. Supposing it were something more than his presence in wisdom and love that he promised them, the disciples, as a body, must be omnipresent, before Christ's being personally with them can prove their master's omnipresence.

In the verbal ascription of the same *works* to the Son as to the Father and to the Holy Spirit, the argument is as inconclusive as before. We are to remember that Christ's office is to work all spiritual things for man, as Jehova's

plenipotentary agent. Christians are "created anew in Christ Jesus" the apostle says. Creation it is argued, is the exclusive work of Jehova. That is to say the word is never applied to any but Jehova's action. But is man never said to create?—to create his own fortunes or his own character. What is the meaning of *poet*, if it be not creator? The word I maintain is not confined to an act of Deity. It is used moreover, both of spiritual things and natural things; and we are very liable, in Scripture, to confound these two wholly different modes of working. Because Christ is come to "make all things new"; "to create a new heaven and a new earth; i. e. to breathe new life into humanity, calling men to arise and come forth from their graves of sensuality and sin, it does not follow that he is God over all worlds. He is indeed, as to this world (as St. Paul says) the head over all things to the Church: i. e. to just and good men who love God and man. We must go to the feet of Jesus, remember, for the true solution of things "hard to be understood" in Paul his apostle. So says Peter. And where do we find coming from Christ's own lips any claim to have created the physical universe, or even the atom world we live on? No where. His is strictly a spiritual creation; through the preaching and living of the very truth of God before men on earth, and among men in heaven. His own all interpreting words to his disciples are, "I must preach the Kingdom of God for therefore am I sent": and again to Pilate. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth;" and yet again, in the presence of his disciples, and to his Father in heaven, "Oh righteous Father the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." And, "I have declared into them thy name (thy character), and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them." In his clearest declarations of his own mission, attributes and works, Jesus speaks only of a moral and spiritual creation of the soul of man renewed in the image of God. That Christ is the founder or creator of the Christian world, out of the moral chaos of the pagan world, none will deny. But none may ascribe to him the creation of our physical world, much less of the universe of planetary worlds, without his own declaration of it. Even if God had made the worlds of matter by the hand of his holy child Jesus, this of itself would not proclaim Christ Infinite. God has given Jesus to this world of souls and this world to him; having himself "so loved the world as to send it his only begotten Son." God has made Him heir of all things here. And justly too, since Christ has spiritually made it, his own all it is and shall be.

If he is our King, our Lawgiver and our Judge, he is rightly so. Since without him i. e. in the line of his principles, we can do nothing well. He is therefore our Way, our Truth and our Life. In this connection and in this relation; but not beyond it, we must, if we speak of him at all truly,—use our very highest terms of reverence, love and praise. We should have offered even prayer to him had he not expressly said, (John XVI. 23.) “In that day, (when I am ascended to my Father) ye shall *ask me nothing* : Ask the Father only.” Notwithstanding he is *as* a God to us, he remains to God a son, the holy child of God ; who is his Father and our Father forever and ever. Neither, without clearly denying our Lord and Master can we say that he is the God of Gods or Lord of Lords.

Once more : the ascription to the Holy Ghost, or holy spirit, of the same *titles, attributes, works* and *worship* as to God himself, is fully explained, without adding a third person to the godhead ; if we will but take the Bible definition of the Holy Spirit. “Who knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man that is in him ? even so the things of God, knoweth no one, but the Spirit of God ? Thus if the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost is defined to be, to God, precisely what man’s mind or spirit is to man ;—we see at once why it should be spoken of in the same words as the Father himself. It is the Father himself. The life, mind, spirit of God, in its infinitely varied manifestations, is continually poured out upon man like the Light of the Sun from heaven. It dwelt in Jesus, and it dwells in every child that kneels to lisp its evening prayer. In one sense it is the Father, in another it is a manifestation of the Father ; but in no case is it a *person* distinct from the Father. Thus viewed by the light of apostolic interpretation, how simple and how clear, become the words “Go teach all nations, baptizing them into the name, (the knowledge) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ;” that holy *Life* of God, which must pervade and baptize, purify and renew all that is made spiritually pure on earth. I do not think there is a text, in the whole recorded life of Christ, that is oftener referred to as proving the Trinity, and yet we find it enforcing no such inference ; for how can a Christian live truly but in the spirit, the holy life, of the Father and the Son ? a life of perfect Love. The Holy Ghost, will at times, be called God because it is the mind of God, which is God, and no other person than He. I have now done what I proposed viz., tried to indicate though, not to complete, the line of Scripture testimony, which leads us to believe that, when harmonized by the voice of Jesus, the Scriptures every where assert, and no where deny or modify, Christ’s first and great commandment of the Divine Unity :

The origin of what we cannot but consider a dangerous corruption of this truth of truths, God's Absolute Unity, I think we trace clearly in the traditions of men; and of quite fallible men. I rejoice in the manifold signs of the world's return to the simplicity which is in Christ. I am glad that it can be truly said that more than half of numerical Christendom, has already given over the attempt to prove a Trinity from *within the Bible*. To that Bible they must all come ere long. We live in an age of revolutions. There are vast changes occurring in opinion, and of habits of thought: habits that seemed imbedded as in ancient granite, and to have become a second nature to men. The world of mind is moving forward with unexampled rapidity. Would that all might come into the glorious and perfect harmony of God's truth! That alone can give rest to the mind and full confidence to the heart. Would that all might go themselves, and lead others to God, through Christ, who said, "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." Thus testifying, at the gates of the grave, the very doors of heaven, that, while he himself should be forever our Master and Lord, *his* master and Lord God was on high: the sole Supreme, the God of Gods and Lord of Lords.

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# THE HOLY GHOST,

## GOD'S POWER AND LOVE.

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# THE HOLY GHOST, GOD'S POWER AND LOVE.

GIVEN ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS, AT NO. 4, TANK  
SQUARE,

BY THE REV. C. H. A. DALL.

No. V.

Read Psalm 139 and John 14 ch. 8. 27. verse.

*Subject.*—"The Holy Ghost, God's power and Love."

Take first the words of *David* ; in the 139th Psalm the 7th verse ;—

"Whither shall I go from thy *Spirit* ? or whither shall I flee from thy *Presence* ?"

Secondly, the words of *Paul*, in Acts 17th ch. the 27th verse "Men should seek the Lord if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us : for in Him we live and move and have our being."

And again hear Paul saying to the Corinthians 1st Epistle, 2nd chap. 11th verse ; that the Spirit of God, is to God, precisely what the spirit of man is to man : no second person, but the same person's life and love and power. The words are, "What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him ; even so the things of God knoweth none but the spirit of God."

Who that was not insane would think of calling his spirit or mind, a person distinct from himself ? Why then call the spirit or "ghost" of God a person, distinct from God's own self ? It could only happen in dark times ; when the Bible and these words of Paul were hidden from men—and when, as shewn in the last lecture, it was for the aggrandisement of the nominal Church, that such a ruinous blow should be struck at the Unity of the Omnipresent Father. No—the Holy Spirit, (or, in old English, the Holy Ghost) is God-speaking, God-working, God-cleansing or baptizing the hearts of men in the purity, love and power of his own life. *That* is the "Holy Ghost" of the New Testament ; and as I believe in the New Testament, I believe in the Holy Ghost. As faithful to the truth God gave us by Martin Luther, I

accept the Christian Scriptures as "the sufficient rule of Christian faith and practice." And now, in unfeigned love of men, and especially of all men who love my Lord Jesus Christ, I ask a brother's right to be heard, in behalf of the highest the deepest the most practical of all spiritual realities, viz., that Holy Ghost which in the Gospel of Christ is our strength, our joy and our only Comforter, in life and death : our God and Father.

It should seem as if there was no, one, revelation of Christ's heart, that had been so strangely missed by the wise and so plainly apprehended by babes. The experience of one humble soul, gained through poverty, bereavement and widowhood is *worth more* to me : as testimony to the presence of the all sustaining spirit of God, the only God, than the combined wisdom of all the doctors of divinity, the councils, the synods, the creed-makers of Christendom.

There is no right-hearted, submissive, sufferer who does not believe in the Comfort of God the Holy Ghost. That Holy and Paternal Presence I mean, of which our Saviour *Jesus* speaks ; and whose comfort he promised to his disciples, when he was about to die. Of it the Gospel says that Christ himself was ever full ; of this, the promise is given, to all who will ask it of God ; and its visible tokens or fruits are, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." *St. Paul* gives us all we need of a theory of the Holy Spirit, when he says "In God we live and move and have our being." We are embosomed in the Most High : even in His infinite and more than paternal love. *David* has written humanity's creed concerning the Holy Spirit, in that eminently inspired Psalm from which we have just read concerning the Father : "Oh Lord thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising. Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. Thou hast beset me, behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there : if I make my bed in the grave behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." "The darkness hideth not from thee, and when I awake I am still with thee !" While Christ and the Old Testament thus continually elevate man's soul to a reverent yet almost *familiar* intercourse with the Soul of the Universe, the Most High God ;—the pride of an unsane-

tified intellect, lifts its head even within the nominal Church of Christ to tell us, that the Father sits on an unapproachable throne in the distant heavens. Instead of coming himself to the lowly, He *sends* down either his Son or his Ghost—to do the work in which a Father should delight above all other. It is not true!—Teaching like this is *Jewish*: it is not Christian. It is lower than Jewish:—for even the later Prophets of the *Jews* revealed, in connection with the Oriental idea of an unapproachable God, the Christian truth of a God who carries the humblest child of humanity in the very bosom of an all-ministering and sleepless love. (Says the prophet Isaiah) “Thus saith the High and lofty *One* that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; and *with him also* that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.” Christ teaches us of no place where The Father dwells not. His presence is *with all who seek him*. The descent of the Spirit in bodily form was but a *form of language*. Christ declares this, and the popular creed denies it. Christ says to all who look to him (Gospel of John 16:26) “I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me: loved Him in me.” Again he says (John 4. 23.) “God is a spirit (a *holy* spirit, *The Holy Spirit*,) and the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him!”

Jesus continually declares greatness, even his own, even the infinite Father's greatness, to consist in scattering benefits for no requital but the joy of it. Calling on us to be followers of him,—to be followers of God as dear children, he uses these remarkable words, first of himself, and then of the Father Eternal “The Father worketh and I work” for man. The Father serveth and I serve—men. It was, you remember, as he rose from the table of the last Supper, that he bent and washed his disciples' feet; and then, presently said “Whether is greater he that sitteth at meat or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? (you ask.) But, behold I am among you as he that serveth: I count *that* greatness, which serves most and longest and best. Applying the same (not yet accepted) definition of greatness to the Most High, Christ says, (in Luke 12. 37,) “Blessed are those servants whom the Lord (not the Ghost of the Lord, but God himself) when he cometh, shall find watching and on duty: verily I say unto you that He shall gird himself and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.” “I came not to be ministered unto (he said,)

but to minister and to serve." He found not "his humiliation," as the astounding blindness of the old creed declares; (and, as is taught to-day, I grieve to think in how many Christian Churches,) Christ found not his *humiliation*, but (as he himself declares) his greatness and *glory* in devoting himself utterly to the service of humanity: in giving his time, his strength, his heart, his life, that he might glorify God, set forth God's true Love before the eyes of men, and so point them the way, and the only way to perfection and salvation: the true and living way of glory, honor and peace. "Herein is my Father glorified (was his constant cry) that ye bear much fruit:—that ye love one another as I have loved you; because the fruit of the spirit is love: long suffering, faithful, ever enduring, love of man as God's child: faith in man's redemption from a brutish, to a divine life; working good to man whom we have seen, for God's sake whom we have not seen.

When we observe that men, that Churches, do not yet confess this godlike service of humanity to be the spirit of the gospel; or the spirit of Jesus; or the Holy Spirit of Jehova; the Holy life of God; or the one thing that distinguishes a Christian; or even the real Baptism and crowning grace of manhood; when we see how deeply even the Christian world is yet in darkness concerning what is the essence and Holy Breath of Christianity, can we wonder that when the question came up for decision in the early church, the infant church "What is the spirit of God? What is the Holy Spirit?" and the council of prelates at Constantinople, 381 years after Christ, were for the first time in history, called on to give the world an answer to this question, in logical form; can we wonder that they split upon this rock (upon which thousands fall to-day) and mistook the world's idea of Holy greatness for Christ's quite opposite idea of it. No worldly mind can receive this, because it seeth him not to be great as the servant of the Universe! Mingled with the whole history of the Church from that day to this, we see that Holy Pre-eminence is made to consist in high rank, in worldly wealth, in a mighty name, in elevation to a throne and in separation from men; instead of its seeking the nearest communion with them and toiling for them with the most devoted love, the most patient endurance, the most indefatigable service! Could Christ have been heard at that council of Constantinople, would he not have spoken as he did to the disciples at Emmaus after his resurrection: when they, lamenting, said, "We trusted, Sir, that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel;" and Jesus (revealing himself in the

breaking of bread, and rejoicing that the true greatness of God had been manifested in his fulfilled mission of godlike devotedness unto death,) replied " Oh fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory ?" There is a worldly glory, doubtless, on the surface of the Record, there is an earthly royalty revealed here and there in the letter which killeth, though no-where found in the life-giving spirit of the gospel. Down to this day is the world, possessed with the idea (which is still taught for Christianity), that it is not a glory but a degradation, for the Almighty Father personally to serve and bless and wait upon his children ; aye personally to minister to their every need. Then surely it was natural, it was to be expected, that Tertulian and Origen and other distinguished and philosophic fathers of the Church from the 3rd down to the 13th Century after Christ, should have delegated to a third person in their Trinity, the Father's work of comforting of his children. Having done this, in keeping with the universally prevalent ideas of holy greatness, they went with their theory to the Scripture and established it for a time as Orthodox Christianity, by means of the world's then prevalent philosophy and its ignorance of Scripture.

To the radical error concerning what true greatness was, true honor, true glory, must then be directly traced the error of the creed concerning the third person of the Trinity as proceeding from the Father and the Son. If we ascribe to Christ, that greatness which he chiefly claimed, the world cries out that we degrade him. If we set forth the spirit of the Father and the Son as chiefly delighting, not in a great white throne, of eternal or co-eternal majesty inaccessible, but in seeking above all temples the upright heart and pure ; not a few declare that we have denied the faith and are worse than infidels.

I have not so learned Christ. Knowing that he is for us, we need little care who are against us. We rejoice in a world-embracing faith, in which all shall, one day be with us, if we in patience possess our souls.

We remember that the really noble hearts of those fishermen who forsook all to follow Jesus, when he was a pilgrim and a sojourner on the earth, did, through Peter's lips, inquire, " What shall we have then ?" Even James and John sought to secure for themselves places on his right hand and on his left, in what they thought should be his kingdom. Then the wise and pitying Saviour had to veil their true reward under the image of an earthly—aye of a worldly and

not Christian glory. "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Knowing the power which the names of those apostles have in the councils of the earth to-day, we must confess the promise of thrones more than fulfilled to them : and we clearly recognise the wisdom of Jesus in giving them the truth at first under a figure. Do we not mark a similar wisdom in his revelation to them of the comfort which they should receive from the Father, when he himself on whom they now leaned so utterly should depart out of this world : and the places that had known him here should know him no more ? Can this surprise a plainhearted believer of these days ? Need the common reader of the vernacular New Testament, misunderstand Christ's veiling the truth in personification, when telling these men to lean on God : men who felt, that without a visible Lord they could do nothing ? How could love *otherwise* tell them that they must presently learn that hard lesson ?

We can well understand why he should speak to them in a loving *parable*, when perceiving that his little children, must be weaned from him, and must now have life in themselves. If the gospel was to be preached to all nations, its preachers must be no more children, but God-reliant men. They clung to him, weeping and trembling whenever he spoke of his death. For a long time they would not, could not believe it. Peter even rebuked him for telling of it unequivocally. But the hour had come for his betrayal unto death. Judas and the band of armed men, were drawing near. Jesus told them the truth that his death-hour was at hand ; but they clung to him, as infants to a dying mother. What could he do but urge them to absolute reliance upon God ? "I go my way to him that sent me (he said). Thither ye shall presently come and see me again. Ye are not to lose me in death ? And if ye were, God is not far off. Eternity is just here, at hand. The House of many mansions is not far from any one of you. Heaven lies all about us. We live and move and have our being in God. Why then feel that I am to leave you at all ? I shall not leave you ! I will dwell in your very hearts. I will be with you even more intimately than now. I shall not leave you comfortless. You need the comfort and strength of a spirit that I shall in vain attempt to give you, so long as I remain visibly with you. It is expedient for you that I go away. For if I go not away the comforter will not come unto you i. e. you will never

learn reliance upon God. But if I depart I will send him unto you. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Does not our Lord, in these last words "Ye cannot bear them now," spoken in this connection, distinctly imply that he was compelled to *veil* somewhat the truth he was declaring? To have told them, simply, in the old familiar words, to put their trust in God, would not have revealed the personal character of God's love to them. This personal element was new to the Hebrew mind. Except in theory, God is not yet believed on, in the world, as a personal friend to each single soul. How few in times of imminent danger, or in the crisis of distressing bereavement, lean upon the Almighty as Christ ever did and has taught us to do! This personal interest and personal presence of the all-encompassing Jehova,—how could it be imparted, so simply, so naturally, so truly, to sorrow-laden, sorrow-blinded hearts, as by that common figure of speech, personification? God was to be with them as a spirit of true strength; unseen, yet the personal friend whom they needed now above all things else; to sustain their faith and carry them with firm hearts to their world-redeeming work. Not to have personified the love of the Omnipresent Father, as if he were for the time, within the form of a coming friend, would have been to withhold, from the anguish of the disciples, God's true comfort and personal presence.

As a figure of speech, personification belongs both to the Old and the New Testament. It is used, almost unconsciously, whenever we speak of God as our Father. We know that a spirit, and above all the Infinite Spirit, has neither body, parts, nor passions; and yet we freely speak of the *hand* of God. The Bible, on every page informs us that God's *eye* is over the righteous and his *ear* open to their cry. "Awake, Oh *Arm* of the Lord, put on thy strength," is a prophet's call: as if that Arm, were a person, that slept. More naturally than the arm of God, is the spirit or *breath* of the Almighty personified, as significant of that Omnipotent fiat by which he called the universe into existence, and conducts all its mighty operations. Breath is spirit and spirit is breath, and neither is a person. In confirmation of which use of the expression "Spirit of God," see Job 27. 3., where he says, "All the while my *breath* is in me and the *Spirit of God* (the breath God gave me) is in my nostrils, my lips shall not speak wickedness nor my tongue utter deceit." None can deny therefore that *breath* and *spirit* are used in Scripture to designate the same thing. Should any one, however, persist in inferring from such pas-



sages, that the spirit or breath of God is a person distinct from God himself, and equal to him, we are at a loss to conceive how he can avoid inferring also the distinct personality of the many other personified attributes and powers of Jehova, which speak to us continually out of the Bible, as if possessed of a personal and individual existence. One or two of the most familiar instances of this will illustrate my meaning. There is the frequent personification of the Wisdom of God; extending, for instance, from the beginning to the end of the eighth chapter of the book of Proverbs: though by no means confined to that chapter. I know of but one single sentence in the Bible where the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost) is so personified as to be introduced speaking in the first person. How much stronger support would the doctrine of its actual personality possess, could its advocates quote in its defence such words as those in which Solomon speaks of wisdom, and makes Wisdom say "By *me* kings reign and princes decree justice. I love them that love me. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting. When God prepared the heavens I (wisdom) was there. When he appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by him as one brought up with him. I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul. All they that hate me love death." With what power would the advocates of the actual personality of the Holy Life, Breath or Spirit of God, wield such words and phrases as these, could they find them in the Scriptures applied to the Holy Ghost; as they cannot. Yet here they find an attribute of God, viz., his knowledge or wisdom speaking in the 1st person. They never think of presenting it as a person, distinct from the Father. Death is personified throughout the Scriptures. Sin is personified throughout the Scriptures. The Church is personified and very strongly so, as all must allow who behold the Church "the bride of Christ" in the Epistles and Revelations. In reading the account of our Lord's Temptation in the wilderness, no liberal scholar of these days understands that Jesus was tempted by an actual person. Yet how much stronger is the figure of personification here introduced, than in any chapter from beginning to end of the Bible that speaks of the Holy Spirit!

But enough:—for we all know the tendency of the language of the feelings to personification. 'Tis the same habit of mind that divided the Most High God in classic Greece among 30,000 persons, all objects of worship. To-day, as

of old, the heart will rush, in its deeper moods, into this beautiful figure. We know this too well, to divide therefore the sacred Unity of God, and imagine several actual persons, occupying the eternal throne; and (as is taught in late and authoritative Trinitarian publications) addressing each other with the use of personal pronouns, "I, thou, he," each in some sense less than infinite, because in some sense dependent on, or aided by, the advice of his fellows. What a tide of scripture testimony must be required by any man, jealous for the honor of the One only living and true God, before he can believe that the personification of any attribute or power of the father, reveals his existence in more than one person! The danger of such a course of inference seems heightened to folly, and almost to impiety, when we find (as in the case of the Holy Spirit,) that it is actually personified only in a *minority* of instances, out of the hundreds in which it is mentioned; that, in the original, it is designated by a *neuter* and essentially impersonal noun and pronoun answering precisely to our word breath or wind, a *gust* of which is the corresponding expression for the word "Ghost." The word *gust* or *ghost* does not suggest personality, as a careless reader, or habit-bound disputant, might suppose. Need I say again that all Unitarians most heartily, fully, gratefully, believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost (expressions answering, as you are aware, to one and the same word in the original). We believe in God the Father Almighty; and in Jesus Christ his only true Son our Lord; and we believe in the Holy Ghost.

Is there no important distinction then, between our view of the Holy Ghost and that of the Churches about us? There is an important distinction: nor can I accomplish my work to-night without clearly defining it. (I) I have indicated the deeply practical view we hold of the personal comfort of God's Holy spirit to the soul, in all time of its tribulation. (II) I have shewn that David held the spirit of God to be synonymous with the *presence* of God, when he said, "whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (III.) I have indicated the almost inevitable origin of the third person of the Trinity, in mistaken ideas of God's greatness; as forbidding his own personal ministration to the wants of his children, a ministration that we see demonstrated in the very facts of His Almightyness, Omnipresence, and Infinite Paternity. (IV.) I have sought to explain the visible descent of the dove, and similar outward facts of the New Testament, as the fitting *language* of God's communication with us creatures of sense:—but as nowise prov-

ing, to the spiritual mind, that the Life of God was ever, for a moment, circumscribed within a dove, or other bodily outline; or resident in tongues of flame, or in the breath which Jesus breathed out upon his disciples, when he said to them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," the effluence of my divine spirit. All this is symbolic language. We distinguish the fact beneath the symbol, just as we distinguish the spiritual *throne* which Christ revealed, from the visible one which he seemed to promise. (V.) I have dwelt somewhat at length upon our Lord's last interview with his disciples, when he promised them a comforter from heaven; to dwell with them and be in them; which comforter he told them was the Father's spirit of truth. I have laid the greater stress upon this, because this is the one chief portion of scripture which seems to ascribe distinct personality to the spirit of the Father. Elsewhere, and at large in the Bible, the spirit is prevailingly spoken of in a way incompatible with a separate personality: viz, as the Father himself; or as an *unction* poured out from the heart or hand, like the consecrating or holy oil of the Hebrews:—or, under the figure of *water* to refresh a man; or a *substance* given in measure, or without measure; or as *seed* sown, and bringing forth fruit; or as *food* of which Paul speaks of receiving a supply (Philip. 1.19, where he is strengthened by "a supply of the spirit"); or as a *flame* of holiness that may not be "quenched;" or as a *stream* in which all Christians must be baptized; or as *light* which is to drive out the darkness of sin. The personification of this energy of the Life and Love of God occurs, here and there, throughout the Bible. But, by the aid of a concordance, any one may promptly satisfy himself, 1st, of the more frequent personification of other energies of God, that no one imagines to be persons; and, secondly, that the personification of the *spirit* of God is the *exception* and not the rule of the scriptures.

(VI.) In the sixth and last place, I am confident that all difficulties of scripture language will readily yield to our possession of the fact that God the Father is *personally* with us day and night. The text first presented and seemingly most relied on in a popular tract, entitled, "The Churchman's belief in the Holy Ghost," declares that the Holy Spirit *must* be a divine person because we are "baptized in his name;" "Go, baptizing all nations into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." The parallel passage in Mark's Gospel, which gives us the Saviour's thought from the pen of another witness, and which is of course an authoritative explanation of Matthew's text, is this; "Go ye into

all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved, he that *believeth not*, shall be condemned." Here *belief* is the Holy Ghost. Thus it behoves us to be very careful, in the examination of texts, to prove Scripture by Scripture. "Grieve not the holy spirit of God," does not (as alleged) prove the spirit or mind or heart of God to be a person, distinct from the Father, but the contrary; and so of other texts.

I. Thus far then are we brought toward a conviction, which some of our Trinitarian friends tell us they would instantly accept, if they could but so harmonize the Scriptures. The conviction is, that God exists in *but one* Person. A harmony of the Scriptures is *found*, we say, that justifies a belief, contrary to that which in time past has been supposed to be an unavoidable inference. By this deeper harmony of the Gospels and Epistles, we see that there are *not* three co-equal persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Father in manifestation; God's Power and Love; the personal *presence* of the Father with the soul! We hold as darkness and error, therefore, the doctrine of the distinct personality of the Holy Ghost; because it is needless and *gratuitous*, as well as unscriptural. We believe in an Omnipresent God. Here, in the Infinite Father, we have a sufficient cause for all known, all possible results, both physical and spiritual. By the hand of such a God, must everything be done that is done. Whence arises the need, of another person to do the work, in whole or in part, of a God, all wisdom, and infinite in power and love? of a God *from whom* and *through whom* and *to whom* are all things?

II. The Holy Ghost is considered a person distinct from the Father, yet as fulfilling all his tenderest, most gentle, winning, comforting, sanctifying offices. This, to us, is a fearful fraud upon the Father. It robs him of all that most endears him to our hearts. It falsifies the chief declaration of Scripture, viz., that practical benevolence is the work of God's delight; and that Christ, who came "not to be ministered unto but to minister," is God's perfect image therein, picturing the very dealings of the unseen God toward man, here and hereafter, in every act of *His* life of service. If, after washing his disciples' feet as an emblem of sanctifying grace, Christ could say, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" then it is the *Father* who sanctifies the soul through Christ, and not the third person of a Trinity. Else had Christ said, "He that hath seen me, hath seen *not* the Father, but the Holy Ghost." We must deny the

separate personal existence of the Holy Ghost, while that doctrine denies us a Heavenly *Father*.

III. Thirdly we deny the separate personal existence of the Holy Ghost because that doctrine denies, for us, the Saviour's teachings. Open any page of the gospel where he speaks of the Holy Spirit. Take for instance Luke's Gospel, (11v., 13ch.,) where Christ says, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Now God gives his own spirit of holiness, his power and love, to whom he will; in measure suited to the capacity of the receiver: but how can we defend a human inference from the Scriptures, which makes Christ declare that the Almighty will give *the Almighty* personally, to man's will, or to man's possession! Impossible. Again: (Matt. 12. 28.) Christ says, "I cast out devils by the spirit of God." Afterwards, (John 14. 10.) he says, "The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works." The spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, then, is the in-dwelling Father, if we deny not the word of Christ. We know that the omnipresent God dwelt in Jesus by his wisdom, power, and love; but to say that within the person of our Lord dwelt another *person*, and even that person, not the Father, nor the Son, is to contradict and deny him openly. Again, in John 6. 45., Christ says, "It is written in the prophets, they shall be all taught of God: every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." He thus declares the Father to be the immediate spiritual teacher of every man. Presently he says (John 14. 26), "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things," i. e., the spirit of Wisdom, already partly yours, and soon to be yours indeed, that holy wisdom of God, that realized presence of the Father, shall teach you and teach every man, all the things of heaven. We cannot accept a doctrine, of professedly human inference, which thus openly denies our Saviour.

IV. We must deny the separate personal existence of the Holy Ghost, because the doctrine contradicts the express teaching of the *apostles*. In his parting words (Acts 1. 4.) Christ bade the apostles wait for "the promise of the *Father*, which, saith he, ye have heard of me." That promise was presently fulfilled in the gift of tongues; in the shedding forth, or pouring out, of inspiration, courage and joy; of a power, and a love, and of miraculous gifts, wholly new to apostolic experience. Peter, (Acts. 2. 33.,) interpreting this gift of love and power from on high, de-

clares that they have thus received the promise of the Father; "who hath shed forth this Holy Spirit, which (in its effects) ye now see and hear." Did Peter mean to say that God had rained down an invisible and infinite *person*, who could be then and there *seen* and heard? No. 'Tis denying the repeated apostolic definition of the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God, to say that the spirit is a person distinct from the Father. For again, Paul says (I Cor. 2. 11), "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the *spirit* of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth none but the *spirit* of God;" i. e., the *Father's* spirit is to Him, what a *man's* spirit or mind is to him. This view the apostle confirms in the 14th chapter of the same Epistle, in speaking of spiritual gifts. "If I pray in an unknown tongue (he says) my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. (It produces no spiritual fruit in other hearts.) I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also." Thus Paul distinctly recognises the spirit as but one *attribute* of personality, or a *method* of manifesting personality. This he had just before said was the same in Deity as in humanity. The spirit is not a person, but an attribute. Shall we deny the apostles, and still affirm that it is a person? God forbid.

We will neither deny the powers which God has given us for discerning truth; nor the testimony of the apostles; nor the declarations of Christ; nor the all-sufficiency of God the Father. The theoretical error of the existence of a third divine person on the eternal throne, we leave where we find it—in the bosom of the dark ages. We leave it where all scholars, among whom I would name Waddington and Cudworth, agree that its *present form* as a doctrine, was first owned by public authority, viz., with the fourth Lateran Council, which sat A. D. 1215.

What a lesson is here given us, upon the intellectual pride of man! What a call to Christians, to come at once to Christ's words and Christ's life as a sufficient creed, is heard in the fact that the whole Christian Church, from the 5th to the 11th century, was rent with a bloody feud, concerning the question whether God's power and love proceeded from the Father and the Son, or from the Father only! This question, after a struggle and conflict of 400 years, finally led to the complete separation of the Church! The Western or Romish Church maintaining that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son while the Eastern or Greek Church maintained that it proceeds from the Father alone. And this question, that a little child might answer, remains to this day a principal cause of alienation between the eighty millions

of the Greek Christians on the one hand and the more than eighty millions of Roman Christians on the other!! Father forgive them, they know not what they do!

Say, brothers, whether or no the time has come for the ushering in of a loftier spirit of Unity and a lowlier spirit of Love.

Infinite Father, turn us again to the simplicity which is in Christ. Open our hearts to the fulness of thy ever descending spirit! In *that* may we all believe. In that may we all unite, through Christ. In that may we live and move and have our being! Oh let all men understand at last, that thou only fashionest their hearts! Let us all be taught of God! So that every man who hath heard and hath learned of the Father may come to Jesus, the one shepherd and bishop of our souls!

# THE ATONEMENT;

## THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN TO GOD.

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# THE ATONEMENT; THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN TO GOD.

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GIVEN ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS, AT NO. 4, TANK  
SQUARE.

BY REV. C. H. A. DALL.

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No. VI.

Bible Readings.—Isaiah 53rd chap.—Luke 15 : 10-24.

Subject.—The Atonement ; the Prodigal's Return to God.

*For a Text*.—Take the words of Jesus in Luke's Gospel, 15th chap., 20th verse, where he says of the Prodigal Son ;

“ He arose and came to his Father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him :—and said ; This my son was dead and is alive again ; he was lost and is found.”

To which add these other words of Jesus ;

“ Greater *Love* hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” John 15th chap. 13th verse.

The doctrine here conveyed is this ; that man must be made perfect through suffering :—must be born of God in sorrow ; must bear the Cross to win the Crown.

As the parable of the Prodigal Son is well called the pearl and crown of all the parables of Scripture ; so, the doctrine of the sinner's reconciliation to God,—widely known in the church by the name of “ *The Atonement*, ”—is the pearl and crown of all revelation. As declared by the life and death of Jesus Christ our Lord, it must forever be, to the believer, the keystone of the gospel arch. Remove it and the entire gospel falls to the ground. Deny man's reconciliation to God through Christ, and the divine mission of Christ is a failure. Rightly understood,—simply received from the mouth of Jesus—the Atonement is the north star of the fugitive from a worse than human bondage. It is the central and vitalizing sun in the firmament of Christian truth.

Differing views prevail as to the mode of man's return to the Father ; and, in the various branches of the church, different reasoners differently emphasize one or another of its

conditions ;—yet is it not delightful to perceive that all are agreed concerning its two great, leading facts ? There is no controversy among Christians concerning, 1st., the absolute necessity of the reconciliation ; without which no man can be saved :—and 2ndly., concerning the other chief fact, that the reconciliation must and can only be through *Christ's* love, as the way ; through Christ, as its author and finisher.

To this universal acceptance among Christians, of the need of at-one-ment with God ;—and of its accomplishment by one spirit, in one only living and true way,—may also be added, at least for all Protestant Christians,—a professed submission to the simplest possible meaning of the New Testament, as a third grand point of agreement.

Being, then, so far agreed : What hinders our holding harmonious counsel together, to see whether, upon renewed and calm and unprejudiced examination, we may not be yet further agreed. Whether, indeed, we may not be as much at one in our views of this central truth of Christian revelation,—as is required of men in this triad-world : men for whom God has ordained, as an exercise of their mutual forbearance,—that they shall not perfectly know one another, so that they may learn the important lesson of *faith* in each other : of confidence in every good man's wish to find the truth, however, at any given time, he may chance to theorize about it.

What hinders our emulating one another in friendly argument, for and against those special views of the Atonement that come home with most power to each brother's mind ? or, that seem most true to men, who have been differently educated—men who have been trained, or led by temperament, to look at the gospel and humanity, from somewhat different points of view ?

Has not the time arrived when a man may be heard, though he differ from us, who seriously professes to love the cause of Christ ; if he never speaks of Jesus, but with a desire to honor him,—and whose life does not clearly contradict his professions ? A confidence that, that gospel charity is abroad which “ beareth, believeth, hopeth all things,”—which is swift to hear, and slow to condemn, shall encourage me, to-night, to declare that view of the great doctrine of Atonement which has come to me, (in the providence of God,) as a Unitarian. 'Tis not for me to say that no man can come to God except through my view of Christ's reconciling work. I have learned it at the feet of Jesus. And there I exhort every man to go. *He* is the only master. All we are brethren.

Those who understand our view of Christ,—as God's perfect image to man ;—those who believe with us that every thing he said, did or suffered—was said or done or endured in a way to *shew* us the Father,—will perceive at once, how impossible it is for us to accept any view of the Atonement which considers Christ as coming *between* the angry father and the guilty child, to appease the one and rescue the other. This, once widely popular view of Christ as delivering man from a consuming fire, viz., Jehova, the Infinite Father,—is impossible to us. It is utterly repugnant to our views of God and Christ and the Gospel. We cannot tell the truth without saying that we shudder, at much that is both said in pulpits and circulated in print, concerning the infinite wrath of God against the feeblest of his children ; a wrath that can only be quenched in the blood, the innocent blood, of his first-born Son. It may be, for aught we know, as distasteful to the calmer and the better taught of our orthodox brethren as to us. I am persuaded indeed that they are rapidly and widely giving up the properly Calvinistic view of the Atonement. They are expunging from the later editions of their books of hymns, those lyrics in which, before Dr. Watts became a Unitarian, he so vividly described the Heavenly Father as quenching his flaming sword in the heart's-blood of his child. I doubt not that the riper judgment of Christians, is every where repudiating this view of the Atonement : men are coming to regard it less and less as an exhibition of wrath ; and receiving, in its stead, the idea, that God from all eternity has held toward man the attitude which He now holds ; viz., the position of the Father in Christ's touching parable of the Prodigal Son. Still, you can scarcely open a popular work on the subject,—you can hardly hear a popular Trinitarian preacher, who, to the common mind, does not declare an Atonement that (to say the least,) draws man's heart nearer to the *Son* of God, than to the Father ; makes the Father capable of emotions *impossible* to the Son ; and denies the Saviour when he says, "He that hath seen *me* (and my love) hath seen the Father truly." Expressions, lately published, and which so shock the moral sense of a Unitarian—are such as these : "Listen to his own memorable saying, as Christ stood on the margin of *that tempestuous sea of wrath, into which he was about to plunge*!"

A text frequently quoted, both to prove the deity of Christ, and the view of the Atonement against which the Unitarian must set his face forever—is an obscure passage, found in the Old Testament, in the book of Zechariah, where

the Infinite One is supposed to be speaking, and to refer to Christ in these words : "Awake, oh sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts." Upon which, this orthodox comment is made ; "Unless the sword of Divine Justice has been called upon to awake against the man that is Jehova's fellow, and unless the Shepherd has been smitten for you, it still gleams with terrific brightness across the sinner's path to God." Again it is said ; "All the vials of his Father's anger were emptied on the head of our blessed substitute." "Behold him on the cross with the accumulated mass of a world's guilt, *laid on him by the Father, and crushing him to death.*" These expressions I quote from a lately issued work, entitled "The way, the truth and the life." It is professedly an appeal in behalf of more *liberal* views of the Atonement, by a Minister and a Missionary of the United Presbyterian Church. I attach no special authority to the source from which they come. I merely present them as late and authentic specimens of popular preaching and printing. Christ's own definition of his sufferings and death, is thus laid aside : when he says (Juo. 15th chap. 13th verse,) "Greater Love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends ;"—which is to declare that his suffering life, crowned by an agonizing death, was Love, in its highest exhibition and clearest language ; not propitiating, but *reflecting* the Father, as Love, willing even to die for his children, if God could die ; Love unconquered by suffering and unconquerable. And again Jesus says, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but *if it die*, it bringeth forth much fruit ;"—which is to say that, as the blood of the martyrs is the *seed of the church*, so his blood was shed, in order to bear the fruit of self-denial and self-devotion in humanity a thousand and ten thousand fold. He died, *i. e.* went with bodily pain and spiritual joy out of the lower into the higher life,—(which Paul so often longed to do) in order to be *prolific* of love and truth and of god-like power in man, on earth and in heaven, to the end of time. Do our brothers forget the story of the Prodigal Son, proving that God hates no *sinner*—but only *sin* ? Do they forget that the gospel opens with proclaiming to all a baptism of *repentance* for the remission of sins ? Do they forget our *daily prayer* that teaches us to ask of God every morning, that he will forgive us our sins *as we forgive* them that sin against us ? Do they forget how many times, and in how many forms, our Lord has said, "*Forgive* and ye shall be forgiven ?" "If ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also

forgive your trespasses." Instead of shedding the glory of the *Saviour's* light over all other statements of the efficacy of his death; instead of casting them all into the shade by reason of *this glory* that excelleth—they have gone back to the days of Moses and Abraham and of semi-barbarous Israel, to seek an explanation of Christ's death in reeking altars and bloody sacrifices, and priestly absolutions! They have not even come down so far as the time of David, who declares in the 51st Psalm, "Thou Lord desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it." "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, oh God, thou wilt not despise!" They forget Isaiah's declaration, where God says "sacrifice is an abomination unto me:" when offered as a *substitution* for individual holiness;—repentance;—and direct obedience; sacrifice offered, instead of duty done. They forget the later prophet Micah's declaration, against the acceptableness of the most costly sacrifice to God, after a man has grown out of his childhood. "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my *first-born* for my transgression? He hath showed thee, oh man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God." This is the true sacrifice. This is Christ in us!

Strange to say;—(and yet *not* so strange, either, if our brethren still maintain that Christ's word is not higher or more inspired than that of Samuel or of Moses,) they have over-looked and over-leaped the plainest and most central declarations of God's only true Son;—and, to quote an expression of their own, have found in Jesus Christ "the scape-goat of humanity," bearing away the sins of men *literally*, as between his horns, into the wilderness. Hear what our brothers call *The Christian Atonement*; in a late Tract bearing that title. They quote, as if to be taken literally, the strongly figurative texts in which Christ here and there is said (not by himself but by men of Hebrew education and Hebraistic modes of speech) to have *offered himself for our sins*, or to have *been offered to God* as a sacrificial lamb. And then our brothers say, "In such expressions as these, which run through the whole New Testament,—and especially in the frequent references made to *the ancient sacrifices*, the idea of substitution, atonement, propitiation, is plainly and decidedly held forth, as affording the reason for the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ." And they proceed to declare, *ex cathedra*, that "*the utmost stretch of human ingenuity cannot frame a consistent*

interpretation of these and many other similar passages of Scripture, without admitting that the death of Christ was a true and proper *sacrifice for sin*." "God and man are the parties to be set *at one*; and man, as he is, cannot (being a creature depraved and guilty in his origin)—cannot, without the most flagrant presumption and impiety, come forward to treat for *life* with his justly offended Creator." *A child, born a cripple, may not come forward to plead for his life with a Father whose name is Love!!* Not endorsed by all, yet such teaching is, to-day, widely circulated for gospel truth; and to doubt it is to receive the heaviest punishment that the church can inflict.

From our, Unitarian, point of view, we are compelled to ask, how it is possible that such an image of God was ever drawn out of the life of Jesus? Where, in it, could men find such a view of God as this? so horrible an image—of a Father, who, without drinking the blood of one child, will not pardon [another; on repentance ever so deep and true?

So far from forbidding his guilty child to plead with Him for his life, He beholds the offender approaching while he is yet a great way off. "He had compassion (says Jesus), and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him; and said, this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found." Here we have the true reconciliation with God; the Christian Atonement. The only escape of the old creed, from the most palpable self-contradiction, and open denial of God, as the Almighty and all merciful, is found in the statement, that, it is *not Jehova* who calls for the sacrifice of innocent blood, but the *law* of Jehova. To us, this seems an abortive attempt to remove one difficulty by introducing a greater. Error, always, struggling to get free (from truth) is more entangled.

Where in the universe *do you find a law*, mightier than Jehova? Where in the New Testament is there a law that involves the Almighty in the necessity of fulfilling, literally, those words of Ezekiel, "The soul that sinneth it shall die?" die without remedy—and unconditionally? It shall perish forever, repentant or unrepentant! Such a notion is not of divine origin. It is a human imagination, placing a *God above God*: a Moloch above Jehova. Christ is our only master. He is our only law. He is our perfect image of the Father. And He was no *hater* of sinners. He laid down his all, his very life for them. When I read *his own* blessed words concerning his sufferings and his death: and compare them with those of Isaiah and of John the Baptist; and especially with those of the writer of the

epistle to the Hebrews; I cannot escape the conviction that *Jesus* carefully *avoided* all sacrificial illustrations. As figures and illustrations, explained by Christ's own anti-sacrificial, anti-vicarious, anti-substitutional teaching,—they *ought* not to mislead any one. Tell me why he never applied to himself that beautiful (and, if brought under Christ's own word, perfectly simple) figure of John the Baptist's, viz, "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." Our Lord was continually illustrating his relation to man, and to God: calling himself, the *Sower* of the seed of truth; the *Vine* of which *Jehova* was the husbandman; the perfect *way* to walk in; the *Shepherd*, feeder and protector of his flock; the *Door* of the sheepfold, to whom (the Father,) the *Porter*, openeth; the *King's* Son; the *Fountain* of living water; the *Light* of the world; the *Bridegroom* coming; —the life-giving *Bread*; the *Seeker* of the wandering and the lost; the *Giver* of life; the *Forgiver* of Sin; the *Raiser* of the spiritually dead; the opener of men's eyes; the *Judge* of men; the *Truth* of God; *Life* of God for humanity? Now, why is it that he never called himself a Lamb, or a Sin-offering? In a single instance he calls himself a *ransom*, Matt. 20th Chap. 28 vrs. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many;" i. e. he came not to be waited upon but to *serve*, and to *wear out his body's life*, in the service of humanity. But there is no *substitution* even here. We ask our brothers to *account for the fact* that our Lord, in speaking to the world, and in speaking to us, avoids that class of sacrificial and emphatically Hebrew figures, in which, both before and after his death, he seems presented by Hebrew teachers to Hebrew minds, as a literal propitiation to an angry God. I do not think that there is anything untrue in these Hebraic and sacrificial illustrations when spiritually discerned. If we take not the world's or our own notions of them, but go and ask of Jesus what they mean—we are in no danger of mistake. But a popular creed refuses to go to him, as to one above Isaiah and Paul and John the Baptist.

Consider how much *easier* it is to accept Christ as a sacrifice offered for us, than to accept and retain Christ *in* us; as an indwelling, purifying (and *therefore* saving) spirit of truth. See how much stronger an appeal is made to man's love of *ease*, by the vicarious theory of man's return to God, than by that which Christ gives us in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The Prodigal found no substitute for self-denial and self-crucifixion. He had to come to himself and say, *I will!*



arise and go to my Father. He came through the *spirit* of Christ and cast his repentant soul on the very bosom of the Father he had offended. Note on the one hand, our Lord's personal avoidance of sacrificial words and phrases, like the touching language of Isaiah for instance : as tending to perpetuate the fatal substitution of the outward for the inward and individual work of human redemption. I mean words like those in Isaiah's 53d chapter. "Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin." "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter." "He was bruised for our iniquities." Note, on the other hand, that man is ever too ready to lay off his sins upon others ; and that his whole downward and selfish nature waits and desires to say (as I have heard believers in a vicarious Atonement say,) "What have I to do with being holy or unholy ? pure or impure ?—Christ is my righteousness. He has accomplished for me all that I need !" Observe but these two warnings, among many undeniable facts that stand out prominently in the gospel and in all human life, and you will be upon your guard against assuming the infallibility of the now considered "orthodox" view of the greatest and most practical of all doctrines ; the way of man's return to peace with God. No wonder men like it. It is so easy.

As briefly as possible let me now give you an outline of what seems to me the *gospel* view of the Atonement. Perhaps the distinction cannot be more concisely given, between the now prevalent view and our Unitarian view, than by saying that others proclaim it to be "*God reconciled*," and we regard it as *man reconciled* : man's wrath subdued, not God's wrath appeased. To us the Atonement is Christ's suffering, even unto death, to show God's love to men : to resist which love, when a man knows what it is, is fire on his head, torture, hell, in his bosom. There is probably no doctrine about which men have held, and do hold, such *various* opinions as this of the Atonement. No two prominent writers within the bosom of *the same church*—are agreed about it. Yet is it said with some truth, that *two* leading views of the sacrifice of Christ now divide the Christian world ; the one, regarding it as an *expedient* to avert God's wrath :—the other as a *manifestation* of his love. The view that I receive from the New Testament explains *both these*, and is broader than either.

"Jesus himself, speaking of his approaching death, said, "That the world may know that I love the Father, and, as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do, arise let us go hence ;" (to the agony of Gethsemane and the death of the Cross.) Thus Christ says that his death was his testimony of fidelity and *love to God*. Again ; while he and his

disciples are on their way from the table of the last supper, to the garden of sorrow, our Lord explains the significance of his death, in its relation to *man*, by saying, "I have loved you with a love stronger than life, with a love triumphant in death, *that ye and all men might so love one another.*" In very words, "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." His death, accordingly, was his last and highest offer of himself to God ; his final illustration of his own first commandment of all ; "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." It taught with equal power—the love of man by man. It said, "Though a man take your very life, die for him. Love him as thyself, since Christ hath loved him better than his own life." Again : how could he do less than give up his body's life, after saying, "He that hateth not his own life for my sake and the gospel's cannot be my disciple?" Should we expect *less* of the master than of the disciple?

The words, "that a man lay down his life for his friends," suggest the illustration that I need, in order to display the wide embrace of a view, that accounts for, if it do not fully harmonize, all the views of the Atonement that have held sway, for any considerable period of time over the minds of men.—Your dearest earthly friend has fallen from the ship's side, in which you are journeying together. We will say it is your father. In a moment, thoughts of all that he has *been* to you, of all that he has *done* and perhaps *suffered* for you, his once wayward, but now faithful son,—quicken your every faculty for his rescue. You fling a rope towards him, but he cannot reach it. You cast a board upon the angry waters, but it floats beyond his grasp. You lower the boat ; but while you are descending to him—he is sinking for the last time. You are at your wit's end. In distraction and agony of mind, feeling your utter inability to save him by your own hand, which you may never have taught to bear you over the waves, you fling yourself into the water ; uttering a call, a prayer, a shriek to Almighty God. That shriek pierces the old man's ear. He opens his eyes to see you at his side, thrusting forward the oar, clinging to which you fell. He makes one desperate effort toward your extended hand ; he reaches it ; He is saved ! Soon, you are together lifted from the sea ; and "Glory to God," is the only thought of your hearts. As, however, in after years, you talk over this singular deliverance, it occurs to you to ask—as the churches who unitedly believe that God (through Christ) is their Savior, are asking to-day ;—what, in that case was the proper instrument of safety, of redemption. "You my Son

were my Saviour," (says the aged man.) "I had been lost beyond remedy, but for my son."—"Nay, Father," you reply, "it was the *oar*, without the *oar* you would never have been saved. You were sinking for the last time as it touched your hand, and without it we should both have sunk together." "If you speak of instruments and methods, (says the father) it was that *shriek* and *plunge* that roused me to a last effort. No; you reply, "it was the boat," the *boat* was the all important instrument. "Had *that* not been at hand, you would have assuredly been lost." "After all" says the good old man, with a sigh of gratitude toward Heaven, "God, God only saved me, out of his own mercy!" "The law of God (you reply) at least his physical law, the law of gravitation, was that which drew you, drowning, beneath the sea. Had you not *saved yourself*, you would have paid the penalty of the broken law; for a law of God, in nature as in grace, knows no exception. God is unchangeable, and without an expedient in the shape of the *oar*, or a substitute in the shape of your son, or your own upward will to save you from the law of God, you must have been lost." Thus, for a time, the loving controversy goes on. And it might go on, multiplying indefinitely the absolutely necessary links in the chain of causes, that brought back the father from the jaws of death, and gave him again to life and happiness and his son.

Does not this illustration cover all the views that have been taken of the method of man's restoration to God and heaven? Are not the broken *law*; the offered *sacrifice* of life through love; the *ransom* from death; the *deliverer's* work and the *individual* struggle found to be necessary links in the chain of this rescue and salvation? Yes, and the earthly pictures the heavenly. Every link is essential: and the errors that have obscured the Atonement, denied the word of Christ, and darkened the face of the God of love and truth—are clearly to be traced to *partial* views. They have arisen from the substitution of some *one* circumstance (that specially struck the mind of the observer) for the entire series, the completed chain—which begins in the single will of the Father and ends in the single and self-originated effort of the man himself. We shall find, on examination, that Christ has presented us *every one* in the series of causes that eventuate in man's return to the Father. In his own discourses, parables, conversations and acts, he has harmonized them all. Those circumstances of the Atonement on which it is most important that *man* should concentrate his attention, Christ has dwelt on with great fulness:—while there are others

which he has barely mentioned. God will take care of *these* ; provided *man* fulfils *those*.

For instance : it is not for a drowning man to centre all his thoughts upon the inflexibility of the natural law of God which is dragging him beneath the water, and of whose violation, unless he can lay hold of *some* sort of a deliverer, the penalty is sure. God has provided the means of the sinner's escape. He has placed within his reach an out stretched Arm, to which he has given all power to help us, in heaven and in earth. What we want, is faith in that Arm :—faith in Christ joined to faith in our better selves ! The natural law was ordained in love, and the means of redemption, in case of its violation, were provided from all eternity by the *same* infinite love. Sickness and disease, not always the result of sin, are sent upon man by divine mercy—and the remedies for sickness and disease are provided by the *same* mercy. Doubtless, *sin* itself is used by God as a merciful *instructor*. Finally, then, the Calvinistic view of the Atonement errs, in fixing the thoughts of a perishing man wholly, or mainly upon the flame that is burning, or the flood that is drowning him, and presenting, that as a full image of the Father. 'Tis well for him some day to investigate the inexorable nature of flood and flame as God's ministers, but his business now is to make sure of his *escape*. A view subsequent to Calvin's ceases to fix man's thought wholly upon the broken law. It forbears a little from confining the horror-stricken heart to the thought of God as a consuming fire. It bids one look from the horns of the unicorns to the approaching deliverer, and fix his whole thought on Him. But again it endangers the man's deliverance and tempts God, by bidding him trust so utterly to the deliverer, as to make no exertion of his own. Just as Satan tempted Jesus to trust the angels of his Father, in casting himself down from a pinnacle of the temple. Now, God helps only those who help themselves : saves only those who save themselves. Neither will Christ help any man or save him, on *any other condition*. Jesus always required some antecedent *work*, in every man whom he was about to heal—viz., an *act of faith*. "If thou canst believe" was the Saviour's condition. Without a man's uttermost action, in the direction of instant obedience to God and love to men, and a patient continuance in well doing, Christ will save no man. With it, every man.

When a broader and more practical than the old view of the work of redemption by Christ, is offered to men, they essay to crush it, by proclaiming it a dependence on mere *morals* for acceptance with an all holy God. "Talk they of morals,

oh thou bleeding Christ, the grand morality is love of thee !” The Unitarian believes that. Still the morals which Christ taught are absolutely essential to salvation : viz., the love of man as God’s child ;—faithfulness and integrity toward man whom we *have* seen, as the test of a genuine love of God, whom we have not seen. The Unitarian learns this at the feet of a master who says “ AS ye FORGIVE, so shall ye be forgiven :” “ With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again !” God forbid that we should proclaim this to be the only link in the chain : and fall into the very same error that we lament in our brethren ; the error of resting in partial, amputated, half-views of truth. No : while we would concentrate our attention upon Christ, we arrange in their Christ-given places,—we seek to regard in their gospel proportions,—every intermediate cause and operation. We have no controversy with any Christian concerning the interpretation of particular texts : none that is not covered by the single objection that they are thrown by the Calvinistic and kindred theories out of their due proportion ; their true perspective ; their gospel harmony :—which is sure to result in false and degrading views of GOD, of CHRIST, of MAN, of LIFE, and of DUTY. We gratefully accept the limited number of texts that speak of Christ as delivering us from the penalty of a broken law, even as any physician delivers his patient, through the heaven-supplied remedy, from the penalty of a broken law. All such texts speak truth to me. Yet I must hear other texts from the lips of Christ, in order to possess the *whole* truth. This is my honest criticism upon the “ orthodox” arguments concerning the Atonement. They are based upon a Jewish and materialistic idea of outward sacrifice, of penance, of substitution, which I regard as belonging to the unspiritual infancy of the race—and hold to be unworthy of a Christian : destructive of a divine life, and of that kingdom of an altogether inward righteousness and peace and joy, that Christ so explicitly declares to be *his kingdom*.

I conclude with saying, that the popular view of the Atonement, rests largely upon a view of *death*, that is heathen, not Christian. Death is only terrible to a sensual mind. Christ’s death was but the crowning act of his life. By which we are taught to suffer and toil, the just for the unjust,—the wise and rich for the unwise and the poor,—that we may bring all souls to God. His death was the plunge and shriek of the son in our parable, that pierced the ear of a perishing man, after all else had been tried in vain. His blood (since he says that the *flesh* profiteth nothing,) is nothing, except

as it symbolizes *all* that he endured for us, in his mind, his heart, his soul. Without a similar endurance, we are lost men. We are *not* men. Except by *this* blood of Christ ; no heart can be refined ; no Christian character developed, no soul uplifted to the Father.

I see humanity in the person of "the prodigal son," brought to itself and to God, through *experience of sin* ; through untold suffering of mind and heart ; through self-denial and self-crucifixion ; through enduring the cross, despising the shame ; and bearing it to the very feet of the Father :—in one single word, through Christ and him crucified. If a flaming sword pierces the heart of the sinner, 'tis not in an angry Father's hand. 'Tis the self-surgery of the poor prodigal. His own cauterizing and healing remorse. Divest the Father, I pray you, of every attribute of wrath. Regard bodily suffering not as only and always the *punishment of guilt* ; but also as the holy sweat and pains of the birth-struggle, whereby God's wisdom hath bidden us *agonise* into eternal life. "Therefore," says the New Testament, "it was *meet* that the Father, in bringing many sons unto glory, should make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

My next subject will be the Creed of Christ ; its simplicity and Catholicity.



Unitarian Lectures.

No. 7.

THE SIMPLICITY AND CATHOLICITY  
OF THE  
CREED OF CHRIST.

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PUBLISHED BY THE  
Unitarian Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in India.

“LIBERTY, HOLINESS, LOVE.”

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# THE SIMPLICITY AND CATHOLICITY

## OF THE

### CREED OF CHRIST.

GIVEN ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS, AT NO. 4,  
TANK SQUARE.

BY REV. C. H. A. DALL.

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No. VII.

*Read.*—Matthew 6th chap. 9-15 v., and 7th chap. 11-29 vs.

*Subject.*—The Simplicity and Catholicity of the Creed of Christ.

*Text*—*John*, 14th Chap. 15 and 24 vs., and 13th ch. 35 verse.

“If ye love me keep my commandments. And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s who sent me. This is my commandment that ye love one another as I have loved you.” “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another.”

The object of the present lecture is to fix attention upon what an apostle calls “The Simplicity which is in Christ.” In attempting to shew how plain a thing the Gospel is, I shall not be misunderstood if I call it the Creed of Christ; meaning by it—the principles that Jesus believed in and taught. The Creed of Christ is the heart and core of the Bible: the way of salvation, essential Christianity; the Law of all spiritual Laws. An ungrateful task, which I leave to others, would be to dwell on the strange contrast between this “Creed of Christ,” this harmony of harmonies, and the discordant creeds of human invention called Christian, and heard in many Christian churches; causing not a few to say, that could the Gospel be saved from its friends, it would make short work with its enemies. With its friends, however mistaken, I respectfully decline all conflict. God grant that we all may give, what of time and strength we have, to setting forth the positive commands of Christ, our common master, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith in him. We need one another; let us help each other. Let each present, and

press home upon men, his own clearest vision of the creed of Christ, and so God's kingdom shall come in due time. I repeat it, that my single purpose now is, to draw from the lips of Jesus, what God gave him to do ; his own account of what he lived and died for ; his own statement of what makes a man a Christian.

1.—Grant me two or three prefatory remarks. And first, It will be allowed by all and denied by none, that he who really accepts the creed of Christ, is a Christian. The creed of Christ, being precisely what Christ commanded his disciples in all time to believe and do, let me find it and accept it, with heart and mind, with soul and strength, and then what matters it who says that I am or am not a Christian ? Little self-respect can I have, and no particle of reliance on God, or the truth, or my own common sense, if I care for what men say of my heterodoxy, after Christ has told me that I am his and a Christian. Let the winds blow and the rains descend and the floods come, I am founded on the rock. If any fearless, independent, genuine student of truth should come to very different conclusions from those which seemed to me the right ones, I would hear him patiently, I would not forget that I might be mistaken. I would go over the whole ground with him afresh, and be never too wise to learn. But I will be moved by no appeal to fear, or fashion, or self-interest ; I will yield only to reason and to God. Being sure that I have Christ's approval, quite sure of it ; having the testimony both of the understanding and of the spirit within me, in its holiest hours ; then, walk circumspectly my heart, but walk surely. Go calmly on thy way. Rejoice ever more. He is a Christian who accepts the creed of Christ.

2.—A second remark will be needed to meet the trembling of some hearts before the apparently startling question, can I know the creed of Christ ? Dare I trust my own judgment in a matter so vital to my happiness, present and eternal ? Should I not rather rely upon the consenting judgment of past ages ? The Church ;—should not the Church guide me ? I reply—You know there is such a thing as arsenic. You know it is white and soluble like sugar ; a common thing, easily slipped into your food. Now, is it safe to eat your morning, noon or evening meal, without the medical faculty to guide you ? Without a physician present, ought you to breakfast, dine or sup ? It is only men who are kept in ignorance of the simplicity which is in Christ, and who are made to believe that there is no such thing, as simplicity in Christ, who talk about the Church as a necessary interpreter of Christ's commands. This will

be made plain enough, I trust, when we come, as we shall presently come to see what Jesus himself declares to be the Gospel. Meantime let us not be disturbed by the infidel fling—so often made at Christianity, when it is said, “You who should know it best, differ so diametrically as to what it is,—that for us unlearned and ignorant men to try to comprehend it, would be folly. When the doctors of the law so mightily disagree about the law, who shall decide?” You shall, brother, if you love truth; for what is hidden in Christ from the wise, is revealed to babes. This is the condemnation of the indolent and the unbelieving, that Heaven’s purest light is shining for them—but they deny the Light, saying “the philosophers call it darkness;” or, “one says that the light is red, and another that it is green, so we do not believe that there is any light at all.” What ought to be the effect of such foolish talk? Sensible men should say (should they not?) “God has given us eyes; we see light: that is enough for us.” If men stumble now, as they did before this light dawned,—their blood is upon their own heads. God will not hold us guiltless if we suffer our eyes to be bandaged: If we say, insultingly, to the Father of Lights, that the light is not here.

The disciples of Plato may help us to understand their master, as to an occasional word that is too deep for us. So may we be helped by the disciples of Jesus, whom men call the Church; “a net,” remember, “that gathers of every sort.” Still, one thing remains clear, either that Jesus himself was an incompetent teacher, though “the common people heard him gladly,”—or that, being a good and sufficient teacher,—the enforced interference of an authority, (calling itself the Church, or by any other name,) between the lips of Jesus and the people’s ear, is an impertinence. Christ bade the common crowd decide whether he spoke truth, God’s truth, or not.

3.—One more remark before stating precisely what is the creed of Christ. There are several witnesses to, and reporters of Christ’s words. In simple justice to humanity, whose fate the Gospel declares is to be decided by their acceptance or rejection of the Gospel, the Providence of God has not said to us, You stand or you fall by the voice of one man, a single witness. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word should be established. So a faithful God has given us, not two or three only, but six or seven. The voice of each one, as I believe, is true. Yet God, who does nothing in vain, has appointed for us more than twice the required number of honest witnesses, many of whom died

for the word they spoke. The essential Gospel, therefore, to believe which is life, and to deny which is death to mind and heart,—is not Matthew's word alone, nor John's alone. It is the truth of God and his Christ, witnessed to in common by John and Matthew, Mark, Luke, James, Paul, Peter, Jude and others. I am far from saying that I reject aught that is declared by any one of them. What I say is, that the essential Gospel lies among them all ; as in any Court of Justice where, in a cause that involves vital interests, many witnesses are justly summoned. I do say that we may clearly distinguish the greater from the subordinate elements of the Gospel by the greater consent of testimony. Wherever we do not find a doctrine established by the voices of two or three witnesses, as of Mark and Matthew, or of Matthew, Luke, and John, that doctrine falls in importance below whatever *has* the joint testimony of Matthew, Luke, and John. It comes with somewhat less authority, if the word of any single witness is unsupported by that of another witness, in a certain fact of his evidence. In summing up the case, it has, if but "one man's word," less weight with the judge ; and we Protestants say that every man is judge of Scripture. There is a broad principle here, such as is rudely expressed in German Courts by the phrase, "one man's word is no man's word." This is not strictly so, as we all can affirm, who have heard the voice of a good man. Yet God has given us for a purpose, and not without reason, the voices of many good and faithful men, variously inspired ; and yet all, without collusion, telling us one thing, as the mind of Christ ; only one thing, as what Christ commanded and taught. In a word, no man whose imbecility of mind would not unfit him to be a jurymen in any common court, can be held incapable of listening intelligibly to the original witnesses of Christ. He can know, he can decide, as to what Jesus said and did. Come then, my brother, draw out from the New Testament clearly, what you see to be the Law of Christ. I will do the same, as respects what I see to be God's truth in Christ : and this done, we will compare together our results, remembering that they hold death and life. If, in God's mercy, we find that we agree, your work will prove mine, and mine, yours. If two or three of us can so work independently, and yet agree as to what is the creed of Christ, then, Christ is in the midst of us.

You will see, I think, when the thing is fairly stated, that the entire Gospel is mercifully given to us, like any seed : as a grain of seed-rice is given us of God, containing

in its tiny husk, with proper culture and opportunity, 20,000 harvests. There is little danger of our mistaking the husk for the kernel if we will use our eyes. We need not take chaff for grain : so distinctly does the creed of Christ appear in the language of the Apostles and Evangelists. It is explicitly stated by them, in the words of Christ, over and over again. It is not, therefore, your inference nor mine. Neither is it of any man's private interpretation, like the creed of Calvin or of Athanasius. While we must resort to the balance of Apostolic testimony to prove any point about which reason staggers, or we are led to differ, the creed of Christ comes home to the reason of a child, in his own sound words. It is his own divine work, no man coming between our hearts and him. It does not wait for after centuries to construct it, like the Nicene creed or the five points of Calvinism, or the thirty-nine English Articles ; or the Catechism of the Westminster Divines. Not at all. Open the New Testament at any page you please, and there it is. All you have to do is to take the book, put Jesus the question, and mind his answer. You may put the question in any form you choose. None is more reasonable, than the teacher with whom you now have to do. Then,

1. Shall we say, Jesus, Master, Who are thy true disciples? " Hereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if he have love one to another." " Love one another as I have loved you."—Behold here the creed of Christ!

2. Again I ask, Jesus, Master, Has not the *mind* also its claims? Thou hast told me what I must feel, tell me what I must know? To this question Christ gives an answer as clear as before. " This is life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom God hath sent. Know me and know the Father. I have shewn you the Father." " Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." Such is the full Gospel of Christ; and St. John reiterates it thus,—*" He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God, for God is Love. He that doeth right (righteousness) is born of God, for God is truth."*

*" Faithfully love men and be true to them, as to yourself."* Behold here the same perfect creed of Christ, in one breath. Hear it, do it, and you are a Christian, as none can deny without denying Christ. Remember, however, that the way to be true to all, yourself included, is God's way, and not the common way. It is a very uncommon way: found nowhere but in the life of Christ, a life which, upon the cross, denied the possibility of death to such as love God.

3. Again I ask,—Jesus, Master, what is the Gospel; the burden of thy mission from on high? I look, I listen; and not once, but repeatedly, comes the same answer as before; “Hear oh Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment:—and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”\* The truth which is to bring the whole earth into a state of peace and love, a kingdom of heaven, is all declared herein. Love God supremely, and treat man as his child; as one entitled to a brother’s rights at your hands. Christ asks no other faith, no other work. This,—the same creed of Christ that we just heard—has its practical side thus declared,—“Therefore, all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets:”—i. e. the whole creed.

4.—Mark this, my friends—that, in the fulness of his God-given wisdom, Jesus Christ refuses to give this creed, any one fixed and unalterable formula of words. He gives men the same idea, the same perfectly reasonable and intelligible creed, in twenty, or in fifty, “forms of sound words:” the words always different, the thought always the same. In god-like trust of the common sense of men, “his brethren,” he said, in substance, this,—“Friends the letter killeth, the spirit only giveth life; so that I must not, and I will not give you what would prove an idol, a sad and sure cause of contention; viz., a formula of authoritative words. No, never. I am the truth; and I speak that truth which under God has made me all I am. The spirit of truth claims at least as much scope as the spirit of vegetable life, viz., that its unmis-takable glory shall blossom out continually in varied forms of fresh beauty and power. Take my thought, (that which the Father has given me,) and let it utter itself, on each occasion, as God shall give it utterance.”

Many devout hearts are unwilling to be trusted as Christ would trust them. Still, there is no help for it. Not a single word of the New Testament comes to men in the language which Christ gave to the ears of his disciples, a tongue called by scholars the Syro-Chaldee. Neither is any sentence of the New Testament to be found in Hebrew; though “the Messiah was of the Jews,” and all his Apostles Hebrews. No; the creed of Christ is no chain of linked words to bind men withal. Only the *truth* he taught is the word

\* Mark XII. 29–31.

of God, and is ours ; of which he said, " Know the truth and it shall make you free." Thank God, dear friends, that there is no such thing as being creed-bound by the creed of Christ. The heart and hands of a man, all he is and all he can be, are pledged by it to duty ; duty to God, and to men, and to himself. Yet this service, as it falls more and more absolutely into the path of the All Wisdom and All Love, is perfect freedom ; and the only freedom. If you doubt it, try it, and you will doubt no more. I repeat it, any one who will sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him—emancipates himself speedily from the worship of any and every formula. He blesses God for the liberty of taking into his heart the heart of the Bible, and of all truth, from the rich discourses of Jesus. He chooses, from day to day, one or other of those terse expressions, those pithy sentences, in which the Great Teacher distinctly says, that he gives men eternal life. He finds the capital truth of the Gospel ; the corner-stone of the temple of God ; the essence, the marrow, the soul of the absolute Religion. The primal truth of the Gospel of Christ, is so clearly and repeatedly declared to be such, that it is really hard to say how men escape it. How is it that, having ears they seem not to hear, and having eyes they see not " the simplicity which is in Christ." How is it that they so resent it when, common, sensible persons—bible readers—assure them that (Christ being judge) their theories fall into the category of *minor* points. That it is not of primary importance what may be their view, or any man's view, of Christ's metaphysical relation to his and our Father ; their view, or any man's view, of the Philosophy of Reconciliation and Atonement ; their view, or any man's view, of the method in which love enters the human soul out of Heaven ; as by a first or a third hypostasis, of a supposed Trinity.

Standing daily in the presence of Jesus for thirty-five years, and hearing him tell, clearly and emphatically, of what are the essentials his religion, I do not know how men, Christian men, Christian Ministers, can define Christianity as they do. I recal a few words from a letter, not long since given to the public of Calcutta by a highly accredited preacher of Evangelical Christianity, declaring the essentials of his faith. Herein, instead of accepting, in any words of the New Testament, the very creed of Christ for his creed, a brother declares " that, as Christians, men must believe in the supreme and essential deity of the Lord Jesus Christ." " They must believe in the necessity and efficacy of his great Atonement for sin." " They must believe in the personality and perfect deity of the Holy Spirit." " These doctrines



Evangelical Christians consider to be Christianity, its beginning, middle and end." And the same writer, speaking for a conference of "Bengal Protestant Missionaries of all denominations" sums up his and the 'Evangelical' creed, with saying, that "if these (the supreme deity of Jesus of Nazareth, the vicarious Atonement and the distinct personal existence and supreme deity of the Holy Spirit) be not Christianity, its beginning, middle and end, then Christianity is nothing better than deism." "The Unitarian" (he says), denying these, "denies the vital and essential teachings of Christ." Such is the conscientious testimony of men whom I believe, still, to be Christians. I certainly believe them to be under a most unhappy delusion with respect to the creed of Christ, since neither I, nor they, can find on Christ's very lips, what they make the beginning, middle and end of Christianity. I believe them to be Christians, because I believe they follow Christ as a Master, and make his word practically their rule of life. The creed of Christ, far more catholic than theirs, includes such as they are. Were that creed *not* my platform, I should cast them out, as they say they do me. They do it as an act of allegiance to their views of God and of Jesus. I act otherwise, because I have not so learned Christ. What I have learned and do learn, from daily conversation with him, is the essential and catholic truth which he gave the world in conversation with the woman of Samaria, and on many other occasions. There I read his whole message to perishing humanity, when he says, "I give you the water of everlasting life. Thus, by me, come all and drink without stint of the spirit of God. The true worshippers must worship the Father, in spirit and in truth. The Father seeketh such to worship him." Here is the same all-embracing creed of absolute religion that we had before. God is Love. God is truth. By love and truth be children of God. Do it you can. Do it you must. Thus are you joint-heirs with Christ, of an ever-widening possession of truth and love; of God's Heart and Heaven. The same creed is declared by Christ to Nicodemus:—God so loves the world, humanity, as to give us, best of all his gifts, his reflected life in man, his image in Christ, the Son of light, as God is the Father of light. Jesus Christ, the embodied goodness of God, is ours—the humanly possible, love and truth of God; the standard therefore and the judge of whatever God requires of man. Heaven and Hell consist in man's free choice of good or evil, of darkness or light:—so Christ tells Nicodemus. Here again is absolute religion. No more, no less. In the Sermon on the mount we have the same

thing, in other words. There again, (only with greater fullness of definition and demarkation of the way) we have the same creed of all healing love, all-saving truth : the imitation of God as the only perfect standard for men. " Be perfect as your father who is in Heaven is perfect." " Hear these sayings of mine (commanding absolute fidelity to God and to men), and you build upon a rock :"—upon what is true forever. Here we have, as before, God the Almighty, the all-faithful God, a loving friend to every man—approachable, imitable ; justly forgiving all repented of and forsaken sin. In one word, God, whom none can see or fully comprehend, sufficiently and very clearly revealed to us in the teachings of his holy child Jesus.

The discourse on the Bread of life is a full Gospel of absolute religion. The discourse on Forgiveness is a complete Gospel. The discourse, on true wealth, given in reply to the question, " What shall I do to inherit eternal life,"—is a full and most practical Gospel. So we might go on from one to another of 20 or 30 recorded discourses of Jesus, and find each complete in itself ; each a Gospel. Why not take one of them as a creed from the very lips of the Master. Of 29 Parables of Christ's own, all are paths to eternal life, declared doors of heaven. In spirit and in truth, they are all one and the same thing. Each is the only way to God, because the absolute and everlasting, the natural and reasonable way of that truth—that love—that fidelity in which all must be perfected and saved.

Finally,—let me say that, of all these statements of absolutely saving truth, the Lord's Prayer is to me the crown. It offers that one, among the many consenting statements, by Christ, of the Creed of his church, which helps me most. The prayer of our Master comes to me, pre-eminently, as the daily-to-be-repeated creed. It embraces, sentence by sentence, all the principles of Christ. Think of it a moment. Here is a form of sound words, in which Christ himself commands all men to gather about an Infinite Parent, as one family, in his own spirit of truth. He bids all men say lovingly, and say daily, to the one God, " Our Father, in Heaven," in Right, in Peace, in Joy forever. Thy will be done by us all, as it is done in thine own heart. By thy strength we will supplant every earthly wrong with right ; all discord with thy peace ; all sorrow, with thy joy. I intended, but the time forbids me now, to dwell on *this* statement of the creed of Christ :—The Lord's Prayer. To you I must give it in charge.

My next subject will be Human Brotherhood the true Church of Jesus.



Unitarian Lectures.

No. 8.

# HUMAN BROTHERHOOD,

## THE TRUE CHURCH OF JESUS.

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PUBLISHED BY THE  
Unitarian Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in India.

“LIBERTY, HOLINESS, LOVE”

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1856.

*Price—Two Annas.*



# HUMAN BROTHERHOOD, THE TRUE CHURCH OF JESUS.

GIVEN ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, AT NO. 4,

TANK SQUARE,

BY REV. C. H. A. DALL.

## NO. VIII.

Scripture Reading.—I Cor. 12 chapter 1-26 verses.

*Subject.*—Human Brotherhood, the true church of Jesus.

*Text.*—In Matthew's 23rd chapter, 1st and 9th verses.

"Then spake Jesus to the multitude and to his disciples, saying, call no man your father, upon the earth : for one is your Father which is in heaven. Neither be ye called Masters ; for one is your Master, even Christ ; and all ye are brethren. And he that is greatest among you will be your servant."

To these words of Jesus, add the following ; "Whosoever shall do the will of God the same is my brother." "Beloved, let us love one another, for Love is of God ; and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." "By one spirit we are all baptized into one body."

The simplest possible meaning of these and other parallel statements of the New Testament seems to be this ; In Christ all men are brethren.

The kingdom, the spiritual state, the church, which Jesus lived and died to establish, commands all men to stand in true, *i. e.* fraternal relations to one another. Among the disciples of Christ, the highest permitted authority is fraternal. Only God the Universal Father, is to be acknowledged as head of the church. Any merely titular exaltation is forbidden to the true follower of Jesus, whose greatness lies only in serving and teaching and blessing all. Every true lover of men knows enough for man to know, of God : for God is love. All that truly love are children of God. They are the family, the kingdom, the church of Christ. He acknowledges no other church. Thus, beyond all contradiction, the Universal or "Holy Catholic" church is made up of those, in every nation, who love God's will and do it. The church of Jesus can only be realized, on earth, in Universal Brotherhood.

Such is the argument. And my object will be to show first, what is meant by Universal Brotherhood, or the establishment of every man in true relations, with God and with men. Then, secondly, I shall endeavour to test these divine relations, by the word of Christ and of his Apostles; to the satisfaction, I trust, of every man to whom Christ's word is law. If there be any here to whom Christ's word is not yet law, I think that even unaided reason will suffice to convince them that Christ's sole object was, and is, to make the earth one happy and true family. He seeks, and will have, no church short of that.

By way of introduction to a subject so broad, at once, and so important, allow me for a moment the testimony of a living observer of society, as it now is.

An acute observer of men, just now writing from the great beating heart of the world, the city of London, says: "The fact of all others which most strikes men here, is the increasing, and well nigh complete, emancipation of society from the bondage of ancient authority." It would appear that evidences of this emancipation are found almost equally diffused in every sphere of life. "No where, more than in England, have popular disbelief and disregard" fallen heavily on the old church bonds and formulas. Never was heard a louder call, to the religious and the philanthropic, to declare what ought to take the place of the old bonds. What shall re-establish that which gave them a just hold on men? How shall we lose the husk without losing the kernel? Both church forms, and state forms, are passing away. Human development leaves the old and demands new: leaves the partial and demands the universal. Even the spiritualism of Coleridge is rapidly melting down the old creeds. That they have mainly fulfilled their office, is declared in a thousand ways.

None can deny, that, in original Protestantism, the church ceased to be an infallible and authoritative guide. It surrendered, in terms, its own plenary and sufficient authority, and expressly constituted every man his own priest. Protestantism would help all, and lord it over the faith of none. It, in fact, asserts a Universal church of truth and love, open to every man. "Protestantism is a proclamation of individual freedom" (boundless, except by love) "in the *spiritual* sphere; just as democracy is a proclamation of individual freedom" (boundless except by honor) "in the *material* sphere." "Protestantism absolves man from all allegiance short of God, in religious things; just as democracy absolves man from all allegiance short of humanity, in secular things."

Among intelligent, free men, both church and state become the highest expressions of the common mind and heart. And their hold on men is all the stronger for being, never arbitrary, but identical with reason and love. Protestantism undertakes to bring men into direct contact with God, as Democracy brings them face to face with each other. Of course, then, there can be no genuine (Protestant) church but a church of universal brotherhood. By this, it is plain that pure Protestantism, Luther's grand "right of private judgment," has forestalled the need of proving that "humanity in true relations" is Christ's body: in other words, that human brotherhood is the true church of Jesus. So much, by way of prefatory remark. Let me now proceed to define the church of human brotherhood, and justify it out of the Scriptures.

I. First, of Christianity as established brotherhood.—When we consider that only greatness and magnanimity can understand greatness and magnanimity; that only goodness can comprehend goodness; that only a self-denying love can appreciate self-denying love; we cease to wonder that it should, as yet, have dawned only on a few minds, that the Gospel of Christ reveals—not a religion, but religion: that Christ shews us, not a scheme of Redemption, a special Atonement,—a method of approaching the Father: but *shews us the Father*; and makes us one with the Father. The church, as broadly defined in the New Testament, is the Kingdom of Christ on earth; the reign of truth and love among men. It is simply, that state of man to which the Creator looked when he made him. Whatever organization, whether of bishops or presbyters, ministers or laymen, helps on this grand result, deserves high honor: but it is not "the church." The only church of Christ, is established truth, and love divine, in man. In the evolution, out of himself, of human souls, God made them to contain, each the hidden germ of a divine life; the elementary powers of godliness; the rudiments of childhood or son-ship to infinite Goodness. In every man, is hidden a spiritual energy, that, under favoring circumstances, may put him in full possession of relations, altogether fraternal to Jesus Christ, and filial to Jehova: and into which he must grow more and more forever. According to the Scriptures, the dealing of the most High God with his children, from the days of Adam, has been strictly, faithfully, mercifully, impartially, educational. A true and wise discipline of us all, has been the order of his providence. As Peter declared to Cornelius, the Roman,—not Jews alone were the objects of God's paternal solicitude,



among the tribes of the earth ; but always, "in every nation, he that feared God and wrought righteousness was accepted with God." The divine love was sown deep in infant humanity, but very gradually is it developed. Every germ lies for some time in darkness, to prepare it for the light. So, to prepare man for welcoming the sun of righteousness, darkness shrouded the earth, and gross darkness the people. As some seed rise earlier and stronger than others, above the soil,—so the seed of Abraham, growing vigorously above surrounding nations, obtained earliest glimpses of the true God. The world was an infant. As a little child, under the hourly care of its father, is sheltered in an earthly home, so was Adam in Paradise. There is nothing in the Scriptures that declares more than the innocence, the childish innocence, of the infant race. The idea that true, Christian, or perfect, manhood was developed in Eden at the first, is of the poets, and not of the Scriptures. Not Moses nor Christ have declared it so. Says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers (patriarchal man) by the Prophets, hath, in these last days, spoken unto us, by his Son, the brightness of his glory—his *express* image." Jesus more clearly affirms the deeper and deeper darkness of past ages, in saying to his disciples, "Many righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them." In Matthew 13-17, Christ distinctly implies, moreover, that others beside the Hebrews were preparing the way of the Lord. The world over, pure hearts were seeking the spirit of God. In so far as they did seek, they found God's love, So far as they did ask aright, they received inspiration from on high. They did knock, and it was opened unto them, only less widely than it was to Abraham, because they knocked less truly or less earnestly. Nothing in the Bible forbids this conclusion ; to which we seem inevitably led by the continual declaration of God's impartiality and omnipresence. Even David could say "God reigneth over the heathen." And in Romans 3-29, St. Paul asks, "Is he the God of the Jews only ; is he not also of the Gentiles ? Yes : of the Gentiles also." The coming of the eastern Magi, (led by some star of God's revelation to them,) to the manger in Bethlehem, is a proof that God had by no means forsaken all the earth, outside of Palestine. He taught others also, as they were willing to hear.

God does save all men by One, who was born within the borders of Palestine, and whose earthly labors were devoted to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Yet he sent his Christ

to universal humanity. "God so loved the *world* that he gave it his only true son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." The image of God, in man, had never yet been developed. The Father, as a husbandman, had sowed good seed, but its time of growth had not come. It seemed as good as dead, though it had not perished, in the soil. God knew the worth of that seed, and what glorious life was in it. He knew its precise condition. And he sent its needed quickening, in the truth as it is in Jesus. Man knew not what he wanted. But God knew. The image of God, man's Father, was to be developed in him, —and behold Christ that Image ! As face answereth to face in water, so God's image to the face of Jesus, in the soul. Every soul that will earnestly behold the man Christ Jesus, —may see its own possibilities, its inner self. "We all" (as Paul says) *i. e.* all who deeply desire it, "We all, with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image ; by (receiving) the spirit of the Lord."

As enforcing the idea that Christianity, the making all men brothers, is the absolute religion,—and the true church of Christ, *man in true relations*,—consider for a moment what Christ and Reason discover to be man's relations. There is, first, his duty to his own soul : of which Christ says that "its every word and thought shall come to judgment;" and again, "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Next, is his duty to the soul which is nearest to his own, upon the earth :—of which Christ says "a man shall leave father and mother and cleave to his wife." Next, is a man's duty to his children ; and Christ has said "Take heed lest ye cause one of these little ones to offend !" And again "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven : and whosoever receiveth (*i. e.* nurtureth) a little child in my name receiveth me :—" and the Apostle adds, "Whose provideth not for his own, hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." Next, (with sufficient accuracy) we may place the home circle : that divine and most catholic institution of God,—Home ;—"The church in thy house." Then, proceeding on, we come to the brotherhood and sisterhood of souls, that, by divinely ordained affinities, most deeply inspire one another with love to God and man : indicated in the command "Do good unto all men, especially to them that be of the household of faith, your fellow believers."

As we go outward, from the clearly marked centre of individual fidelity to God ; we trace the lines of our God-given relations, from the starting point of self-discipline, self-denial,

self-consecration,—widening and widening, like the concentric circles of a pebble in still water. As these, ere long, begin to intermingle, so do our lines of duty. Yet, though they often cross each other, not one is destroyed, to the very border of the lake, which is human life. Our fidelity to the first, in fact, secures our fidelity to the last. As the great English poet saw, when (corroborating the primal lesson of the Gospel) he said,

“ To thine own self be true ;  
And it shall follow, as the night the day,  
Thou can’st not then be false to any man.”

From “ the household of faith ” (which I take to be, strictly, the band of friends whose presence and sympathy is most quickening to our love, joy, submission, faith in God,) we proceed to the neighbourhood or city, wherein God has most richly bestowed our opportunities of toil : as indicated by Christ’s love and tears and toil for Jerusalem. Next, will come, perhaps, our country : with the duties of the Christian patriot to labor earnestly to perfect its law, politics, trade, commerce, reforms. As indicated by the fact that Jesus, the patriot of patriots, (loving all men) went not out of the country in which he was born. Finally, we come to our duties to the world at large ; into which Christ sent his Apostles, saying “ Go teach all nations ; ” and “ whosoever doeth the will of my Father in Heaven, the same shall be my brother.” To these, should perhaps be added our relation to the church triumphant in heaven ; which contains (as we fondly trust and believe) many souls that have not ceased to love us, and whom we also are bound to remember. Even beyond this, we do not doubt that God has established for us, in the course of an unending development, absolute relations with circles of intelligence and love, compared with which, all that as yet reveal themselves are narrow indeed. For, if this were not so, how could Paul say to Christians (*i. e.* to all true men) “ Let no man glory in men ; for all things are yours ; whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas,” *i. e.* the attainments of these apostles : “ or the world, or life or death, or things present or things to come ; all are yours. And ye are Christ’s ; and Christ is God’s ! ” Or how could St. John say,—did he not recognise these ever-widening relations, as what Christ came to establish and quicken forever,—“ Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be.” Or, how could our Lord say to all “ Be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is per-

fect." And again, "In my Father's house are many mansions prepared for you. Wast thou faithful in a very little on the earth? Enter into the joy of thy Lord; Have, now, authority over ten cities of heaven."

If Christianity, or Christ; is the absolute religion,—if, in other words, Christ is the perfect and sufficient *bond* that holds together and satisfies all these heaven-ordained relations of humanity, then what is—what can be—the Church of Christ but *Humanity brought into these relations*? Many, I know, think that *pardon*,—an obtained forgiveness of God toward man,—is the whole of Christianity. Certainly a man is in no state to give earnestly and without reserve, to God, his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, until he can feel that God loves him and has forgiven him: that God's smile is on him: His spirit's blessed help vouchsafed him. Without God's conscious co-operation with him, what, that is worthy of a man, can he accomplish? Nothing. And yet, (as I view it) forgiveness, a sense of pardoned sin,—is not all. This being accomplished, a Christian life has but begun. "God hath not given us the spirit of fear (says an apostle) but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind;"—power to begin *now* our eternal and true life; to begin to stand *now* in absolutely true relations, loving God and man—and a sound mind, by which we know when we keep his commandments. Through these we may rise, after every downfall, stronger in principle, and with a deeper hunger and thirst after righteousness, than ever before.

It is asked, Are you, Unitarians, members of Christ's Church? Do you believe in the Church? I answer, yes; surely. We are. We do.—"But what is, to you, the Church of Christ?" I answer, Jesus says, It is his kingdom, his flock, his body of men. He answers in a way to signify, to me, that it is the gathering of any and every soul into its true position,—Christ's own position—towards God and man. That position makes Christ at least the model-man, the Prince of the true kings of the earth. It makes Christ the shepherd of the one human flock: Christ the master of the family of God: Christ the head of every man, and of the body of souls that are true souls—of men developed into the image of God, born out of the flesh into the spirit. Such is the general and comprehensive answer of Him whom all Christians profess to obey, under God. The church is the *assembly of the true*, on earth and in heaven.

1.—I ask of Jesus again, What is the church? and he graciously proceeds to define it to me, more at large. As a first definition of church communion, I hear him say "When

thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy father which seeth in secret." Thus he makes every man his own priest. He commands him to come directly to God and be the offerer of his own sacrifice of praise and prayer. The man in his closet, alone with God, Christ declares to be in communion with heaven. In full church relations with the Head of the church, and with the Father.

Again Christ says,—not only in his sermon on the mount, but throughout the length and breadth of the gospel,—that every believer must be a preacher of the truth. No candle is lighted to be hidden under a bushel. *No man* is inspired of God with any truth, to hide it from his less favored companions. Jesus was not speaking to his apostles, or to his disciples only, but to "the multitudes" that gathered to him on the mount,—when he said, I ordain you preachers and disseminators of my truth! "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father who is in heaven." Nor, again, was he speaking of a chosen few, but of every human soul, when the message came "Behold thy mother and thy brothers call thee;" "And he looked round on them who sat about him and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall *do the will of God*, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother!" Is it not a valid call to a place in the church, to be called Christ's brother? Thus does Jesus set aside all merely outward and conventional claims to union with him, not excepting even the claim of the mother that bore him. Thus our Lawgiver declares his church to be founded on the Rock of Ages—God's eternal truth. Joining it is identical with doing God's will.

There are only two instances in the Bible, where Christ himself speaks of the Church (Ecclesia) by name. They are these: 1st.—When Peter, for the moment, identified himself with the primal truth that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God: Matthew, 16th chapter. There, in allusion to his name Cephas, a Rock, Christ answers Peter's declaration of his Messiahship with "Thou art Peter, and on this Rock (*viz.* the truth, as it now is, in Peter) will I build my Church"—will I gather home a world to God. Our Lord then proceeds to give the same encouragement to the other apostles—that he had thus given to the most ardent of their number. But Peter's fickle heart presently ceases to be the rock that it was, and becomes, (for a moment at least) Christ's adversary. Falling as lightning from heaven, Peter met the terrible rebuke, Get thee behind me, Satan!

The only remaining instance in which Christ is recorded to have spoken of the Church by name, (*Ecclesia*), is in Matt. 18th, 17th, where Jesus is teaching the lesson of forgiveness, the lesson "conquer by love." There Christ says, "First go to the offending brother alone; then go to him in company with one or two mutual friends: then tell it to *the church*, the circle of your fellow-believers: and if they cannot persuade him, or soften his heart, let him be to thee as a heathen man, one outside the church: no true brother.—The church, in the one instance, is universal man—and in the other, a gathering of Christian friends. Finally, then, every closet of prayer is a true christian altar, and he who frequents it, in order there to pray for men, and to meet his God, attends at least one gospel form of the Church of God. When the apostle says to christians, each and severally, ye are the *temple* of the living God, and the spirit of God dwelleth in you,—who shall deny that a holy man (find him where you may) in communion with the Father, makes, with the Father—a holy, true and apostolic church—a church, though but two persons ever meet there, viz., God and a child of God.

(2) Again I ask Jesus, my Master, for the true church. And, after exhibiting, in many ways, the fact that the church may reside in one single soul, that a church which God loves to dwell in, is the temple of the upright heart; he points me to *two* souls fulfilling true relations. These are intimately bound to one another, and to himself, and the Father. "Whosoever two or three souls are gathered in my name, (my spirit of oneness with God) there is my church"—Christ says: "There am I in the midst of them." "And again I say unto you (Matt. 18. 19.) that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them, by my Father which is in heaven." Here again is a church. And observe, that Christ is not speaking to any particular class of men. He is not addressing exclusively his apostles, or any bishops or priests, or ministers formally ordained. It is a good thing doubtless that laborers should be specially trained to the business of preaching Christianity, as to every other business. Our Master nowhere forbids this. His example commends it, and his words command it. He confers, however, (as I read the New Testament) no prerogatives and no privileges. The most "faithful and wise steward," whosoever he be, and only he, can be archbishop. The name is nothing, the service all. The only honor is in serving most. Any two conscientious Christians, any two God-fearing minds, then, (as it should

appear by this record,) may fulfil the essential functions of a church. They may help one another into the love of God, and to the study and practice of Christianity. They may ask all true blessings on themselves and on the world, and be heard and answered from on high. Their prayer and blessing will be "valid;" will avail as surely as that of any church or Pope on earth. Christ has pledged his word, that if they two are agreed as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them, by the Father. The solution of this seeming paradox is found in the fact that these men shall have placed their wills in full harmony with God's will. Christ says they may do it. They can do it. Any two souls are ordained by Christ himself to do it. Doing God's will from the heart, so far as they know it, they are inspired to see more and more deeply into the mind of God. They have no will but God's, and His will must be done. Asking according to the infinite wisdom, of course it is done according to their asking.

(3) Again, I inquire of the Gospel "What is the true Church of Christ," and it points me to the Christian *family* circle. Jesus loved Mary and her sister and Lazarus. The Church which Jesus loved, most of all, to frequent in Bethany, beyond a doubt was the family circle of his friend Lazarus. Again, was not that house a church, in every instance, of which our Lord said, in charging his seventy disciples (Luke 10, 5) "Into whatsoever house ye enter, first say 'peace be to this house,' consecrate the temple! and if a son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it." "And in the same house remain, preaching and teaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God." Such a house was surely a place of Christian instruction and worship, and those who gathered there were a Christian Church. So (Romans 16, 3.) St. Paul bids his converts "greet Priscilla and Aquila and the church," (i. e., the circle of Christians)—"that is in their house." To Philemon, Paul wrote, sending "grace" to him "and peace," "and to the Church in thy house." These are but illustrations of the fact, that, according to St. Paul and his Master, a holy, catholic and Apostolic Church (holy in its purpose, catholic in its spirit, apostolic in its sanction), may be gathered, and is gathered, into any house where men meet for holy conversation, as brethren; as the children of one Father, God, and the servants of one Master, Christ; and to help each other into the knowledge of God and the love of Christ. A living and honored preacher of the Orthodox Congregational Church of New England, (Dr. Bushnell,) speaks according

to the testimony of Christ and his apostles when he calls Home (a Christian Home) "the church of childhood." He would have spoken Christianly and Apostolically, had he called it a church of *manhood* too. If each of our homes be not a Church of Jesus—brethren, the blame is our own. It is not the fault of the Gospel. God grant we make churches of our homes, to-day and henceforth.

(4) Again, we search the Gospel, to know if we have obtained its full definition of the church; and we see the circle extended; not only from the single soul, communing in silence with the Father, to the communing of two souls, in Christ; and then, from the union of two Christian hearts in prayer, to the sanctuary of Home and the family communion; but also, from this, to the equally "divine" institution of the household of faith. By divine, I understand, written in history, and in the constitution of man, by the finger of God; an institution appointed by the Father, out of his sovereign wisdom and love, for the development and perfection of the human race. The household of faith is thus of God's appointment. I mean the little flock of worshippers, that, in any part of the Christian world, are drawn and knit together, not perhaps by domestic ties, but by spiritual affinities. Not more surely by the Creator's guidance, do the fowls of the air gather themselves in flocks after their kind, than do souls gather themselves together, according to their spiritual instincts, cravings, loves, aspirations. How could this fact be more beautifully illustrated, or plainly revealed, than it is in Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, out of whose 12th chapter we have just been reading? It is here seen to be of God's ordaining, that men should divide themselves into households of faith, the world over. This is not dividing the house of God against itself; but dividing the servants of God into companies, each to go to its department of the common toil. The denial of this proper separation of Christians into parties or churches, according to their spiritual needs and affinities, and calling it heresy and schism,—is one of the saddest errors of Christian history. The denial of Christian fellowship to men for following the pointing of God, and listening to the commandment of Christ, and so taking separate posts of labor in the great vineyard—is a melancholy perversion of the Gospel. It is a fatal struggle against God. Brothers, let us listen not to the dictation of men, but to the wisdom of the Gospel of Christ, when it declares that there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. In Christ's congregation, there are many house-holds of faith. "There are differences of administration, but the same Lord."



"There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." Was it not evidently in anticipation of this divine diversity, of this constitutional tendency in human hearts to cluster together in knots of sympathy,—denying none, yet preferring some,—that our Lord appointed the table-meeting that is called the Last Supper. This was appointed, not as "a dreadful mystery,"—not as an awful partaking of flesh and drinking of blood,—but as a social religious festival, for mutual Christian encouragement, and glad remembrance of Christ. Considering the simplicity, freedom and naturalness of this appointment, and how manifestly it harmonizes with the will of God, as written in the nature of man, we are not surprised to find that this, our Lord's table-meeting, has come exclusively to indicate *a church*. Doubtless, those who have met about the table of the Supper, from the earliest days, have been a special church circle. They have had the strongest mutual sympathies, and been bound to each other by a special warmth of religious love,—that purest and deepest love of all. We see how naturally this rite, peculiar as it was to Christians, came to be an open declaration of a man's being a Christian, and not only so, but of his belonging to Christ's Church, and even to some one assembly of disciples. I would not have it otherwise. Thus we obtain, directly from Christ and his apostles, a fourth view of what is a Church of Christ.

It was, first, the Christian communing of a spirit on earth with the Infinite and Omnipresent Spirit. It was, secondly, the communing of two independent, yet consenting minds, in the temper of Jesus, with the Infinite mind. It was, thirdly, the communing together in Christian love, of the hearts of a holy family. So was it (in the next concentric circle of human sympathy) the communing of friends, a band of sympathisers, who came to worship in common:—to uplift the cross together:—to bear one another's burdens,—to confess to one another their faults, and to aid each other in all Christian endurance and godly living. This I have called the household of faith. This circle is commonly allowed to be a church—a band of partakers in common at the Lord's table. To this is applied, in the *fourth* place, according to my imperfect classification (though in the *first* place, according to popular usage,) the name of a Church of Christ.

Beyond this may be distinctly traced, upon the Gospel chart, enlarging circles of Christian sympathy, which are as truly churches as those already pointed out. Two of these also are popularly designated churches, viz., first, *a gathering of churches*—an organization of many house-holds of faith.

Such are the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Unitarian Church, and the like. Secondly, every one gives the title of "a church" to a circle composed of a *union of these*; enclosing more or less of them, according to the more or less hopeful and liberal views of the believer, who draws the larger part, if not all of them, within the pale of what he calls "the church catholic or the church militant." The church triumphant on high, is also a third (popularly considered) church, and includes the souls of all just men made perfect in heaven. Thus, the view of the church which I present, as containing circle within circle, from the greatest to the least, is little more than an enlargement, (I must call it a gospel extension,) of the popular view of it. A widely prevalent view of the church, as if it were hedged in by an "apostolic succession," or by a special mode of administering baptism, or by the traditions of the Fathers, or could be locked within a certain enclosure by certain *keys*,—seems to me, not only unsupported by the commandments of Christ, but in direct opposition to them; as well as to the whole spirit of the Gospel. It seems a return to the narrowness of the old Hebrew creed, "Thou shalt love only thy neighbour." Any Gospel Christian may boldly say, "I am too much of a Catholic, to be only a Roman Catholic, or a Greek Catholic, or an English Catholic. Let my Catholicity be Christ's." Thus to limit the definition of Christ's church, is a flagrant denial of Christ. As much so as if one should speak of a magnanimous selfishness, or a partial universality. Why,—seeing so far, can men not see a little farther?

Instead of halting at the Romish, the English, the Methodist, the Orthodox, or the Presbyterian Church, and saying "This is our Master in spiritual things; this is our Father on the earth; and all who join it shall be our brothers;" why cannot men broadly say, "One is our Master even Christ, and all who love him are our brethren!" Instead of saying "Whosoever shall accept the decrees of the Council of Trent shall be a Christian": or "Whosoever shall subscribe to the 39 articles, or believe the Westminster Confession, or the teachings of John Wesley, (honor to his name!) or pass through our ordeal of emotional experience:—such, and none other, shall be acknowledged as belonging to us; or to the Christian church, or to the body of the redeemed;—why can not our friends and fellow-lovers of Jesus—whether Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, or Roman Catholic, all consent to lift a banner in their midst, inscribed with these truly Catholic words of God's own Christ,—“Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother—my Christi-

an brother." Or, write over the door of every church, of every sect, these other words of his; "Hereby do we acknowledge all men to be Christ's disciples, if they have his love one to another." Or these words of Paul; "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

I will end as I began, with a reiteration of the delightful and undeniable truth, that "Mankind is manifestly entering upon the period of its majority." It must ere long be self-relying. A law within man is to govern him. "Church and State, which have hitherto been his father and mother," are to be called so no more. "They have been the soul and body of his past culture and discipline," but the hour is coming and now is, when only one is his Master, even Christ,—and one his Father, even God. Accepting all due reverence for what they have been to us, our earthly father and mother, if they are wise, will open wide their doors, and bid us speed, hereafter, upon our spiritual and material mission, with the blessing of heaven upon our dangerous but necessary path over the mountains of this life of trial,—to a kingdom of heaven, a state of universal justice and fraternity; which only energetic and self-poised spirits enter; and of which Jesus says, "The violent take it by force." "Christian intelligence is henceforth the crowned king of men; and the Christian goodness which sanctifies it, their sole anointed priest."—Or, as Christ has it, "Now the Kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it!"

The subject of the next lecture will be "Sin, voluntary, not inherited."

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SIN VOLUNTARY, NEVER INHERITED.**

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No. IX.

**Bible Readings :—**Ezekiel 18th chapter. Gospel of Matthew 18th chapter 1-20, vs.

**Subject.**—Human Nature good ; Sin voluntary, never inherited.

1. As introducing this discourse, and showing its Scripture basis,—take for a text ; First, the words of Ezekiel, 18th chapter, 1st and 2nd verses. “ What mean ye, that ye use this proverb, saying. The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge ? As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion, any more, to use this proverb in Israel. Behold all souls are mine. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.”

2ndly.—The words of Jesus Christ our Lord : “ Receive the word into an honest and good heart.” To which declaration of Christ, add the word of his Apostle Paul ; Romans, 7th chapter, 22nd verse ; “ I delight in the law of God after the inward man : but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” Nor would I forget, Proverbs, 14th chapter, 9th verse. “ Fools make a mock at sin.”

Thus clearly does a Prophet of the Old Testament repudiate the idea of inherited sin. And thus do Christ and his Apostles recognise, in every human heart, an inborn power to judge what is right : a natural delight in the law of God. The moment we accept the word of Christ, as subordinating and interpreting with authority, the words of every

other teacher ; (not only outside the Bible, but within it ;) we can draw from the Bible a consistent theory of human nature. We learn of God, through the heart, as in the Bible, what are the powers which he has given to man : what are the faculties and consequent duties enjoined upon every man : as in the first and great commandment, to love the Lord his God with all his heart and mind, and soul and strength :—and his neighbour as himself. None can be indifferent to the question, what heart, what mind, what soul, what strength is given me, by my Creator ? By Him who breathed into me the breath of life ? What self have I within me, as my standard of true love to others ? But, until we make the voice of God's only begotten Son, our law, paramount and supreme, we shall merit and obtain confusion as our portion. The Church will be a tumultuous host without a leader. It will press forward its great work of subduing the world to God,—not as an army, but as a mob. While we delay the recognition of this great principle—a principle which discovers in the Bible a progressive revelation, culminating in Christ, our Lord himself must mourn and wait. He must weep, as of old, when he lifted up his eyes upon the people and was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

The word of an undivided Christ—when we sit at his feet and learn of him,—gives no uncertain sound concerning the relation of sin to humanity, and of humanity to sin. It is only when we go to David first, and to Christ afterwards, to Moses first and then to Jesus—that we “find no end of our wanderings.” Thus it is, that men worship their own theories ; and substantiate them with Bible *language*, denying the Lord Jesus. Thus men misunderstand what God gave to be of absolute, and what of temporary authority, by the mouth of Moses. We mingle and confound the transient and Hebraic element of Scripture, with what is permanent and ever-lasting. We confound the human darkness with the divine light, in Job and David and Isaiah :—in direct denial of our Saviour, when he said, contrasting the New Testament with the Old, “No jot or tittle of the law shall pass away till all be fulfilled : and *it is* fulfilled in one single word of mine, Love God and man.” “Therefore no man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment ; (therefore I do not insert the New Testament in the Old ;) for that which is put in, to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.” Leave therefore the language of the Old Testament until you have first comprehended that of the New ; concerning man, his

constitution and destiny. Leave Moses, and the book of Genesis, and its account of "the fall" of man ;—and come, at least, to the later Prophet Ezekiel ; if not to a greater than Ezekiel—Jesus Christ. The whole difference between Unitarian views of human nature and the old view,—results from our great rule of Scriptural interpretation, "Go to Jesus first." Go to Christ first ; whose discourse is continually introduced by saying,—“Ye have heard that it hath been thus said, by them of old time, but I teach you a higher wisdom.” (Matt. 5th chapter.) What can there be, but rents and schisms, in Christ's church,—while its teachers essay to patch up their essential doctrines out of the old law : with now, the sigh of righteous Job, “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean ?” and again, the agony of David's guilt and self-condemnation, “Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Did Christ ever say to any man “Behold thou was shapen iniquity ?” Did he say of universal man “Behold he was shapen in iniquity ?” No ; never. Even David said of universal man “Behold thou (God) hast made him a little lower than the angels !” And Moses declared of universal man that God had breathed the breath of his own life into him, and made him capable of his own likeness. But Christ said to “fallen” man “Know the truth (all men) and the truth shall make you free ! Know God ! See the Father in me ! Understand him, love him, obey him, and go on to be perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.”

Where do our brothers find authority to say, that there is, in man, (even taken as we find him) “evil, and only evil, continually :” that God looks down upon man as he is, “to find in him *nothing but sin*, that abominable thing which his righteous soul abhors” ? When Isaiah said that “the whole head was sick and the whole heart faint,” he was speaking of the *then* condition of the house of Israel ; and of its actual defilement by having its “hands full of blood” and its heart of idolatry. When St. Paul said (in his Epistle to the Romans) that both Heathen and Jew had done wickedly, in the past : and spoke of the heathen as having been “filled with all unrighteousness,” and of the Jew as having had “no fear of God before his eyes,”—he was not describing human nature ; he was speaking of sins committed from a wilful abuse of God's gifts. He was loudly calling on men to be *true* to the nature and capacities which God had given them ; powers of which men themselves had been ignorant, until God sent his Son to reveal a nature in them, deeper than they had sup-



posed ; an inward man that was destined and empowered (as Paul told the Ephesians they were able) to be "filled with all the fulness of God."

We have taken words from the lips of Jesus to-night, to guide us into the truth, concerning the most awfully practical question of all religion, viz., that of human disobedience and depravity ; the cancer and leprosy of sin. The question presents itself in this form ; Is this blighting curse of human life—this foul destroyer of our hopes of heaven—a thing of our own choice, or not ? Are we individually responsible for it ? Or, is it a gout, a scrofula, a consumption, which we could not choose but *inherit* ? which we drunk in ; unconsciously, with our mother's milk, and over which we had no more control, than we had in deciding the contour of the face, or the color of the skin, or the height of the frame, that should be ours ? I have always heard it given as an axiom, that "necessity knows no law :—" that, "where there is no choice there is no blame." So that to declare sin "inherited" is to declare it a misfortune and not a fault. To me, the remark seems to be a sound one, that, "according to the plainest principles of morality, a natural constitution, unfailingly disposing the mind to evil, and to evil alone, would absolve it from all guilt." That, "to give existence under this condition would argue unspeakable cruelty in the Giver :—" and that "to punish the sin of a child so unhappily constituted, with endless misery, would be a wrong unparalleled in the records of despotism."

The impression has been abroad, in time past, that *the Bible said* sin was inherited, and yet that we were held responsible and punishable, by the All Father, for being born with it in our constitution ! That, though original sin was wholly our misfortune, God counted it our fault. That Jehova had said, in the Scriptures, that though we could not help it, he would make us suffer for it ! God's voice, in the heart, has loudly condemned this doctrine, from the day of its introduction into the creed of the church. If I am rightly informed, some whole denominations,—our brethren of the Methodist communion, egr.—while professing to believe that man is born totally depraved, escape the force of that doctrine, or evade it (instead of openly denying it) by saying that we are only punished for *actual* sin : and that infants, though full of sin, have no actual sin. Alas, for such tampering with truth, and with God,—to save an erring creed !—or hold together an outward organization ! I doubt not that hundreds, nay thousands, of the most pious and God-fearing souls, have assented, verbally, to the doctrine

of original or birth-sin ; and persuaded themselves that they were believers in it—because they were told by men whom they had much reason to honor, that the Bible said so. It does not say so !

We have reason to bless God that the day is come, when every man can obtain a copy of the Bible and read it for himself. Every single soul is now responsible, if it accept not the simplicity which is in Christ. In ages not long gone by, the simple and unlearned Christian was wholly at the mercy of the scholar. An Origen or an Augustine, a Gregory or a Leo, told him what to believe : and, if he dared open his mouth against it, the fiery doom of the heretic was upon him. Without access to the Bible, is it any wonder that he subscribed to the creed prepared for him ? A brighter day has now dawned. The future life of the world, unlike the past, is not to be comprised “ in the biographies of a few men.”

Turn we then, fellow Christians, from those ponderous “ bodies of divinity”—soul-less bodies, too many of them—that give us metaphysics for Christianity. Turn from merely human wisdom, and come to the feet of Jesus. He is no nice reasoner about trans-substantiation, or con-substantiation. He never preached predestination, or election, or reprobation. He says nothing about supra-lapsarianism, or sub-lapsarianism—or any other of the hyper-refinements of theology falsely so called. His theology is the knowledge of God. He gives ever, to the starving soul, bread and not a stone : not husks, but meat. When they asked him “ Lord are there few that be saved ?” he replied “ Strive ye to enter in at the straight gate !” When, even an Apostle, asked him, saying “ Lord, and what shall this man do ?” his answer was “ What is that to thee ? follow thou me !” When asked concerning the very question before us to-night ; inherited sin ; “ Lord who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind ? he said “ Neither : Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him :” i. e. God distributes his gifts variously, even the gift of sight, that men may recognise them as His gifts, and thank God for their eyes, their limbs, their health—which they may have received, and others not. And he clearly implies that infirmity, or suffering of body, is no necessary penalty of sin. Least of all is bodily death. It is a means of spiritual refinement, purification and growth. The outward man perisheth, that the inward may be renewed, day by day.

You well know that we find hardly any trace of what are called *the doctrines of grace*, of original sin, and of predestination, before the Pelagian controversy ;—which was near the

end of the fourth century. Modern theologians, I believe, all accept the historical fact, that it was denied by none of the fathers antecedent to the fourth century, that God had left it entirely in the power of every man to act well or ill. Augustine does not deny, that, before he engaged in the controversy with Pelagius, he held the same opinion in favor of free-will that was held by the others who had preceded him. It is well known that, with Augustine as a leader, on the one hand, and Origen as a leader, on the other, there arose two great parties in the Church : schools of thought, rather, that continue even to our day : not always distinguished by the names of sects, but rather by the theological philosophy of their leading scholars. For, hardly any except scholars, or men of subtle intellect, seem capable of dealing in the hair-breadth distinctions which furnish the polemical ammunition of the contest. Augustine, Calvin and Jonathan Edwards, represent a school of philosophy in the church, which lives on its continually renewed controversies with the practical school, of Origen, Arminius and Channing. I distinguish these two bodies of thinkers, according as they receive or deny a freedom of choice to man, by the terms "theoretical" and "practical." But I am far from supposing that the followers of either, can claim, in real life, the exclusive possession of practical Christianity.—There are too many other influences at work to allow men's theoretical acceptance, or denial, of the freedom of the will, to work in them, practically, its deadly issue and legitimate fruit.

But I pass by the *history* of the doctrine of original sin, as too complicated and widely ramified, to admit of a tolerable statement within my present limits. All I shall attempt, is to give what I have received, as a Unitarian, from reading the New Testament, and believe to be its uniform teaching, concerning sin. I will give only what is given me from a prayerful and grateful acceptance of Christ's words, as of sufficient fulness and final authority. I lead you only to Christ. I am not prepared to say, that our Unitarian views concerning sin are not precisely the same with those that are believed by some of our Trinitarian brethren. Certainly, as regards the *fact* of sin in the world—we are entirely at one. As we are, concerning its shutting men out from heaven :—of which Christ's righteousness is the door. Men have modified Calvinism, so many times, that, though much of its phraseology is retained, it is doubtful whether John Calvin, would recognize a single feature of it, as his own. It may well be, that many have already out-grown even their own, later published, formulas of faith. That you may judge whether

the world has need of views, more in harmony with the New Testament, and with our positive knowledge of the constitution of man, I shall introduce my subject, with a single quotation from each of three standards of faith, in common (Trinitarian) use.

1. The first of these is the Westminster confession ; which, in 1688, was adopted as the standard of the national faith of Scotland. This declares, that God punishes, as a sin, our inheriting the nature of Adam : a thing over which, of course, we have no possible control. The words of the Westminster confession of faith are these : " By this sin (eating of the forbidden fruit) they (our first parents) fell from their original righteousness and communion with God ; and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupt nature conveyed, to all their posterity, by ordinary generation. This corruption of nature is, both in itself and in all the motions thereof, truly and properly sin. Every sin, *both original and actual*, doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and the curse of the law ; and so made subject to death, with all miseries, spiritual, temporal and eternal."—I must be more familiar than I am with popular methods of explaining the Westminster confession, before I can say (as I would gladly say) that it does not teach, for a revelation of God, that the Father of the spirits of all flesh curses his children, or at least the greater portion of them, before they are born ! He makes them inheritors of hell—an eternal hell—in the very fact of their birth—and without their having done anything, either good or evil. For no fault of theirs, he subjects them to the most fearful endurance of miseries, temporal, spiritual and *eternal*. Can Kali or Shiva or Moloch do worse than that ? Consider, for a moment, what these words convey, and I think you must allow that—when taken as they stand, by an unsophisticated mind, they inspire a most repulsive dread and honest hatred of the Being whom they describe ; but to all possible love of God they present a positive and effectual bar.

2. The second quotation, I take from the 39 articles of the Church of England : the English Standard of national faith since the days of Elizabeth. Article 9th ; Of original or Birth Sin ; reads thus : " Original sin standeth not in the *following* of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk,) but it is the fault and corruption of the *nature* of every man ; that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam ;

whereby man is very far gone (in the Latin, "gone as far as possible," "*quam longissime distet*,") from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil: so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." The remainder of this ninth, of the 39 Articles, is given nearly in the words of St. Paul—and, as explained by Christ, is true to a Unitarian.

3. The third quotation I take from a work entitled Watson's Theological Institutes; which I understand to express the views of sin held by our Baptist and Methodist brethren. In the 18th chapter of his Theological Institutes, Watson says, "The doctrine of scripture, is, I think, clearly established to be that of the natural and universal corruption of man's nature." Again Watson says, "Though infants do not commit actual sin, yet theirs is a sinful nature." Again: "As soon as the law was broken, man was cursed; so as that thereby God's spirit should be withheld, and should be kept off, otherwise than as upon the Redeemer's account, and as according to his methods, it should be restored. Hereupon, it could not but ensue, that the holy image of God must be erased and vanished." These words, (which Watson quotes with approbation from Howe's posthumous works) he enforces by saying "This accounts for the whole case of man's corruption. He sinned, and the spirit retired (!) The tide of sin, once turned in, and the mound of resistance being removed, it overflowed his whole nature. In this state of alienation from God, men are born: and, we may recognize many acts of external goodness in the world, without at all impugning the doctrine of an *entire* estrangement of the heart from God."

Thus widely taught is the doctrine of the entire corruption of man's whole nature (soul and body) by Adam's one act of sin;—so that no man can now be said to be, in any sense, born in God's image. God is not the Father of the human family, as it is; according to the Articles of Religion of the Church of England,—the Westminster confession of the Scottish or Presbyterian Church—and the Theological Institutes of a leading teacher of other "evangelical" Churches. According to these, we have no warrant in the Bible for teaching all men the Lord's Prayer. We are strictly forbidden to speak of universal man as any longer "made after the similitude of God." Man is not now, even in capacity, the image of God, the child of God. That image is long since gone from him. It is wholly "erased and vanished!" I am far from saying that such is the actual belief of every

Churchman, of every Presbyterian, of every Baptist. But I must and do say that such appears, to me, to be the plainest meaning of their acknowledged standards of belief. I suppose these standards to be—to a considerable extent—out-grown ; and become a dead letter to many who do not bear open testimony against them. I imagine that, in every direction, men are looking and longing for a creed to be written, if not in the very words of Jesus, yet in harmony with the clearer light of truth, that God has given to our advanced and advancing age. If the divine image be “gone” indeed from our common humanity ; if it be “wholly erased and vanished” from the souls of all but a few “converted” Christians, then *it is not true* that all men are brethren. Then was the Apostle Paul in error, when he said “Honor all men !” Then are we no longer bound to feel that interest in man, as man, which would be demanded of us—if it were true that “we have all one Father, even God !”

Men and Brethren, we know that the age into which we are born is with us, when we say that *this common fraternity is true*. That all men, baptised or unbaptised, should pray every day, saying “Our Father.” That, though undeveloped, and in *danger* of being lost, the elements of childhood to God are hidden in every man. That every man is commanded, by Jesus Christ, instantly to love God as his Father, and man as his brother. The Unitarian doctrine of sin does not deny this. The New Testament (as I read it) and the entire Bible, declare that God makes man upright : literally “God made men right, but they have sought out many inventions.” God gives us an outward man, and an inward man : an animal nature, and a spiritual nature : a law in the members, and a law in the mind : a lower self and a higher self : the flesh and the spirit ; the image of the earthly, and the image of the heavenly man ; desires whose related objects are of this world, and desires whose related objects are above this world. Both these elements are born, in capacity, in every man. Without the one, he would be wholly an animal, and without the other, wholly an angel. Both are necessary to constitute a man : even in infancy. “Love (says St. John) is of God.” Did you ever know a child that could not love ? even disinterestedly ? I never did. Truth is of Christ, and is Christ. “I am the truth,” he says. Did you ever know a child that could not tell the truth ? or think truth better than a lie ? I never knew such a child. Goodness (Paul says,) is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Did you ever know a child that did not enjoy being good ? “Except ye be converted and become as little children, (says our Lord,) ye shall not enter

into the Kingdom of Heaven :”—which is, at least, to say, that there is something in childhood which is of heaven ; something incorrupt ; something pleasing to the eye of God ; something beside inclinations to evil.

The great mistake of the past, concerning the Bible doctrine of sin and of human nature, lies in its halfness and partiality. How true it is, that we must do the will, before we can know of the doctrine, that is of God ! An age of blood-shed, oppression, persecution, bigotry, and slavery of the mass of men, could not see, in the Bible, the whole truth concerning the paternity of God and the brotherhood of men. It could believe in man as a fiend, but not in man as a friend. It could understand that there was in man an evil heart of unbelief, but not, as Christ says, (Luke 8th chapter 15th verse,) “an honest and good heart” too ;—a spirit of good, in life-long conflict with the evil. It could believe that the heart of man was “deceitful above all things and desperately wicked,” as no doubt it was, and often is ; but not that it was reverent and righteous (as Peter says, Acts 10th chapter 35th verse,) and that, “in every nation, were men fearing God and working righteousness and accepted by God.” The day is now come, for us to discover and proclaim the truth, and the whole truth: which (as I think) is this : That man is a creature of progress : of advancement, of growth, of birth, out of the lower into the higher. Such is the law of his being. A law which he cannot oppose, and live. Disobedience to it is moral death ; or worse than death. It is unceasing war. It stirs an internal conflict, whose conscious and continual issue is wretchedness, emptiness, starvation, self-hatred. To be happy, man must grow. He must be born again, and again and again. He has faculties (call them “a nature,” if you will) in common with the beasts that perish. As he now is, he cannot help being hungry, thirsty, weary. Christ himself was so, and without sin. Like the young colt and the old horse, man loves action and he loves repose. But, in his very constitution and manhood, he is gifted of God besides, with faculties that crave, not meat, or drink, or sleep, but knowledge, wisdom and goodness ; duty and truth ; Christ and God and heaven.

All will allow, that human nature is nowhere defined, in so many words, in the Bible. The Bible gives us facts, and leaves every man free to deduce, from the facts, his own inferences. The Bible records the various *manifestations* of human nature, both good and evil, and leaves every man free to make up his own theory ; provided he do not deny the voice of God in his providence, or in his Christ, nor the

whisper of God's spirit in the soul. Let it be distinctly understood that the Bible speaks as often of good in man, as it does of evil in man; the good being inherited as much as the evil. And all the Unitarian asks, is, that not one statement should be received alone, but both, united. Not half of the truth, but the whole. We accept, with sadness indeed, yet without a word of qualification or denial,—every text of Scripture, in the Old Testament and in the New, that records man's wrong-doing and sin. They are all true: alas too true: darkening and miserably blotting, as they do, both the sacred and secular page of man's history, in the irrevocable past. At the same time we accept, and in God's name, we call on our brethren everywhere to acknowledge, that our common humanity has always had some virtue in it. In its darkest day, there has, at least, been light enough to make its darkness visible. It has never been so wholly dead, as to return no echo to the prophet's call. It has never yet been so depraved, that its cheek could not tingle, for its meanness, with a blush of shame. It has never been so much in love with sin, as not to honor righteousness.

First, then, we ask the teachers of man's total depravity—to present every text of the Bible that seems to uphold their doctrine, and cast shame upon man: and we will acknowledge that it is all true. Then, we will show them other texts, on page after page, that give honor to humanity: disproving their view, that man is capable *only* of evil;—or has ever sunk so low as to be capable only of evil. Proving also as the gospel, the Bible view,—that there is good in every man,—and that *sin* is *sin*, because man was made for something better. Sin would not be the evil that it is—were there not deep-buried in every man, the perfect germ of manhood, and of an arch-angelic nature; the power of a heavenly life. I call on those who receive the Bible as something better than a mass of self-contradictions,—I call on those who believe that whatever Christ has not included in his teaching, is no law to the Christian,—to test a doctrine which plants itself upon certain *texts* of the Bible, by comparing Scripture with Scripture; and by subordinating the entire Bible to God's Christ. The first of these, viz., the test of accompanying Scripture, will, in a majority of cases, solve every doubt and give the mind repose. For instance: take a text, oftener quoted perhaps than any other, to prove that man is born a sinner; born, not innocent but disobedient—born a proper subject of immediate and eternal punishment. The text is one already referred to, “Behold I was shapen in iniquity.” And how was this spoken? It was wrung out of the heart of the self-condemning King of Israel,



after he had murdered Uriah to obtain his wife ; and been openly rebuked for it by the Prophet Nathan, saying " thou art the man ! " Well might a heart, through which had so often flowed the inspiration of the Almighty ; that had said of itself (86th Psalm), " Preserve my soul, oh God, for I am holy ; " and again, (18th Psalm), " The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness ; according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me." Well might such a soul now take back those words !—and cry out in its remorse, " Deliver me from blood guiltiness, oh God. My hands are no longer clean ! I am not holy ! Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight ! " Well might a heart, so honored of God as David's had been, and now so dishonored by himself, not only say, as did self-condemning Peter once, " Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, oh Lord ; "—but, in deeper anguish of soul, declare that he was altogether foul, from head to foot, and from his very cradle. Thus David is found saying, when he was a holy man, " I am holy," and, when dripping with the blood of innocence, " I am foul, polluted, guilty of blood, unholy." So Paul, before the Sanhedrim, declared, looking upon all his past life, " Men and brethren, I have walked before God, in all good conscience up to this day : " and, in another attitude of soul, looking back upon the same life, declared " I am the chief of sinners." A mind unread in scripture, might say that there was, in every such case, an irreconcilable contradiction. But it is not so. They are voices wholly true to different states of feeling. Taking the language of great and true souls, in the single attitude of contrition, as if expressive of their whole character—is doing them a fearful injustice. When a child asks, who was the worst man that lived in gospel times, the chief of sinners, —you have no right to answer " Paul." When he asks who was the fullest of iniquity, born and shapen in it, in Old Testament times, you have no right to say " David." Such are the literal declarations of the Psalmist and of the Apostle, in their hours of self-crucifixion : but such are not the calm and logical facts. And, if it is wrong to say so, of the very men whose own lips declared this of themselves, —it is a greater wrong to take these personal confessions of actual sin and apply them to universal man : and weave out of them an essential clause of a creed for the church of Christ. You may not say, Here is a view of human nature, a philosophy of the constitution of man—which, unless a man receive at our hands, we separate ourselves from his company, and deny him our Christian fellowship, and the

Christian name. By such a course is Christ wounded and dishonoured in the house of his friends. Brother, can you see this done, and utter no protest against it? Can you hear it—and be still? If you can,—may God forgive you! As a Bible reader, you should know that the Scriptures continually balance their statements of man's sinfulness, against other statements of man's fidelity to God. Will you then yield a passive assent to a brother who tells but half the truth, when he says that the Bible declares "There is none righteous, no, not one?" As a Christian and a man of truth, you will tell him that, of the same people, (the Jews) the Bible also says, they are God's chosen ones; his peculiar people, a holy nation. Accept not half a gospel, brother, but, as you fear God, receive the whole. Take not a broken weapon for the sword of the spirit, but put on the whole armor of God! Remember that, while it is true, on the one hand, that "all men are sinners," i. e. none are perfect on the earth; it is true, on the other hand, that many have been declared holy. All are recognized as possessing abundant power to be holy; to cease to do evil and learn to do well. All are blamed, because, having the power of holiness, given them of God, and waiting to be given them in ever increasing measure, they are so slow to accept and use it. A man not only denies, while preaching total depravity, the voice of Christ and of the Bible, but he injures his neighbor. He weakens the sense of responsibility for sin, so as greatly to endanger our deliverance from it.

Accepting the same facts of authentic history, with our brethren,—facts declared both in the Old and in the New Testament,—we are led to a view of human nature more honorable to God, and more stringent upon all men.—"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, (the same, be it observed, who presently sought to kill him) If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." There is no hint of any thing in their *natures*, preventing their choosing or refusing his word. "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The knowledge of the truth should lift off the stone from the grave of sense and call the dead to life. Reason should open the sepulchre wherein his enemies had hidden their better nature. The knowledge of God ought instantly to reveal them to themselves, and break the chain of their sins. They answered him, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man, how sayest thou, ye shall be made free?" Jesus replied "Whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin." He did not tell men that they became the thralls of sin through the inheritance,—but through

the voluntary commission,—of sin. They might avoid evil if they would, through a patient continuance in well-doing. If they chose to do God's will, they would know more and more of his doctrine. If they would faithfully use the light they had, more would come. They would thus, by co-working with God, conquer the outward or animal man, and achieve the birth and development of the inner man, "which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness." They would break the shell which restrained the growth of this seed of God, called man, and come forth to a higher life,—first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. By our Saviour's pointing, nature, (both vegetable and animal) is seen to be full of analogies, that should make clear to any thoughtful child, the strongly contrasted conditions of mind, that come of yielding to the downward, instead of choosing the upward tendencies of human nature. There is nothing clearer in all the teachings of Scripture, than the existence of these two kingdoms in every man. Each has its appointed sphere of exercise. Nor has God left any man in doubt which ought to command, and which obey. Every man knows, that (as in the case of Jacob and Esau) the elder must serve the younger. The first-born, whose only inquiries are selfish, and innocently so at first, what shall I eat? what shall I drink? and wherewithal shall I be clothed?—is the keeper of the second-born, whose only inquiries are, How shall I do God's whole will, and speak His whole truth? "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" is hidden in every man; and when the influences of God quicken it, one can only resist them to his own misery and moral death and soul-abortion. The law of vegetable life, in the seed of grass, cannot be confined, even between rocks, when God's moisture and heat and light do visit it. It will topple down the proudest palace-wall and loftiest tower, in its strife to grow. So the divine in man, when Gospel light, the tears of trial, the warmth of love and the soil of Christian opportunity are given it, must live and grow. It must leave its darkness and come forth. Or, refusing, be its own tormentor; its own continual enemy; its own torturer in its own hell. Whence—but out of such a mind as fights with itself, in the sensualist, the miser, the drunkard, the liar, the slave of any passion,—could Milton have drawn the words,

"Which way I turn is hell; myself am hell;

"And in the lowest deep, a lower deep,

"Still threatening to devour me, opens wide,

"To which, the hell I suffer—seems a heaven."

The truth, once quickened in the heart, shall bless or curse. "The *Word* shall judge him in that day." This is damnation (says our Lord) "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness better, because their *deeds* were evil." Surrounded with Gospel truth, Christians may essay to live like the heathen. They cannot do it. Sooner may they take fire into their bosoms and hope not to be burned. The figures of speech are many and various, under which Christ and his Apostles convey to us this original fact of a two-fold nature in every man. Both energies are sinless in their normal exercise. Both *selves* are innocent when exercised in their appointed spheres. Each is helpful to the other, like elephant and rider. Both, when developed, rightly hunger and thirst for their related objects. Still the lower, the first-born, stands in the relation of Goliath to David. And David is sure to be conquered and enslaved by Goliath, unless he put his whole faith in God. A higher than the strength of this world must deliver him from the army of the Philistines. Not until a child is able to choose the good and refuse the evil, do the Scriptures say that he is capable of sin: or, in any sense, a sinner. Paul did not refer to Adam's sin, except to convince the Hebrew of his need of Christ. Here, Paul's own explanation is important, when he says "to the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews." Christ is our sufficient Saviour. We ask no other word than his. We need not that Paul become "as a Jew" to us. We are sure that, what Christ himself was wholly silent about, cannot be essential to Christian faith.

The text declares the voice of reason, as of Scripture: Not that every man is to become a child of God by the full feeding of all his powers alike, whether animal or spiritual: heedless of the fact, that, in this world, the spirit naturally treads on the grosser nature, that dies for it, in due time. The spirit, the soul, demands the denial and crucifixion of the flesh from day to day, and hour by hour. I pray your marked attention to this point, because I have known men, whom I could not suppose willing to misrepresent us, fall into the strange mistake, that Unitarians believe that human nature needs *nothing but development* to bring it into the image of God. It is not so. We say that it needs pruning as well as growth. It needs a daily cross: a change of heart, from things earthly to things heavenly: a new birth, from a life of sense, to a life of God. A complete re-generation, from and out of a mortal, into an immortal man. This is more than development. It is conquest. It is rescue from a fall,

or from many falls. It is redemption from bondage to freedom. It is salvation from moral death (or a state often worse than death;) to life, or a state far better than life. Thus the word of Jesus declares "Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin." "And the servant abideth not in the house for ever." Sin drives the prodigal from his home, into a far country, to feed on swine's bread. "But the son abideth ever." He who conducts himself as a son, as a child of God, needs no banishment—though there be no son whom a good father chasteneth not. "If the son" (Christ born in you, God's truth and love, born in you) "shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Ye cannot sin because ye hate sin. And yet, again, ye can sin (even as Peter sinned in denying his master) if, by reason of imminent temptation, ye for a moment forget God. None, I think, will deny, after these words of Jesus, that the soul that knows and does the truth, is free to good. Christ declares that it is free to all good. And experience teaches us that, however firmly braced against evil, by the habit of well doing,—while in the flesh, we are also free to much evil.

Still, blessed be God, we are encouraged to believe, that, as the world grows, God's law in nature and in grace will come to be better understood. As Christ comes to the hearts of men, they find it easier and easier to keep under the body, and treat it only as a faithful animal. Paul declares that "the creature itself," the bodily and earth-born part of man, shall in time—"be delivered from the bondage of corruption" (from all desire toward excess) into perfect harmony with man's spiritual life. Even that *will* in us, which is now, too often, our adversary, shall tempt us no more, but only help us. It must enter with us, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Thus then stands the truth. (1) No array of *Scripture* quotations can establish the old doctrine of man's exclusive or *total* depravity. That half-truth can only be defended, out of the Bible, by special pleading; and by rejecting one half the testimony. (2) Again, the *history of the church*, convicts the old theory of depravity of a wholly *scholastic* origin. As such, it is weighed in the balance and found wanting, by later discoveries in mental philosophy. Philosophers now unite to declare that man has no faculty that finds its healthy exercise in evil. Evil comes of derangement, of usurpation and disease among the propensities and powers. It is no birth-gift or power of nature. Sin is unnatural. There is no greater sin enumerated by St. Paul, than for a man to be "without *natural* affection."

It is sad to know that numerous sects of Christians still declare man absolutely and "totally" depraved. Even liberal, Methodist Watson teaches that "The will of man, with respect to true good, is not only wounded, bruised, inferior, crooked, and attenuated; but it is likewise captivated, destroyed and lost." Man is become utterly hateful to God! So that unless you or I can love what is absolutely hateful, we *cannot* love man as he is! If we do love him, it avails him nothing. It cannot benefit him (says the creed) until, by a miracle, God has changed his nature. I thank God, and my Lord Jesus Christ, that I have not, upon my soul, the deadly discouragement of such a doctrine! I thank God too, that, to so many of my brethren, this doctrine, if not theoretically, is practically false.

Fraternally, I exhort the brethren to re-examine their ground: especially its Bible foundations: and see whether they are not advocating an error, for God's truth. I ask them to consider whether God can require of us to "make bricks without straw:" to give him perfect work out of damaged material? Does not the Gospel call us to be perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect? and then add the declaration, that "it is required according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not?" If so, every man's faculties are adequate to a *humanly* perfect obedience; the imitation of Christ and of God. Christ says that every man's energies are talents lent him of God. Depend upon it then, that the gold of our Lord is good gold. It is not adulterated or spurious or of light weight. Its earthliness burned away in the fires of our earthly discipline,—human nature shall shine in the courts of the city of God. It never did receive evil as a birthgift. There is no sin but chosen sin. Christ told his enemies that, had they not both seen and hated, him and the Father, they would have had no sin. The guilt of sin lies in man's consciously entering its palaces and hugging it to his heart. Tell this to man and woman. Henceforth, "the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." "Men shall no more say, the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge." Sin *cannot* be inherited.

Human nature is every man's best gift from God. If any man defile it, he wrongeth his own soul (says Solomon): and Christ commands every one to receive his word, "into an honest and good heart."



CHRIST, OUR LORD,  
  
GOD'S IMAGE AND FULNESS IN MAN.

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# CHRIST, OUR LORD, GOD'S IMAGE AND FULNESS IN MAN.

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GIVEN ON SUNDAY MORNING, 23RD MARCH,  
NO. 4, TANK SQUARE,

BY THE REV. C. H. A. DALL.

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No. X.

Bible Readings, Isaiah 51 : 1-8, John 5 : 16-27.

*Subject.*—Christ, our Lord, God's Image and fulness in man.

*Text.*—John 14th ch. 9th verse.

“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

To which add Paul's words, in his Epistle to the Colossians, 2nd ch. 9th and 10th verses.

“In him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily; and ye are complete in him. That ye should be filled with all the fulness of God.” Eph. 3 : 19.

As introducing the subject of this discourse, allow me one deprecating word. When Paul was persecuting Christians to the death, he did it for God's sake. We believe him, when he says, he verily “thought he was doing God service.” So have Christians thought, age after age, while piling the faggots about a fellow Christian; or while preparing the fearful tortures of the Inquisition. The Lord Jesus was once entering a village of the Samaritans, and they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And does any man doubt that it was from a desire to honor their master, that James and John resented the insult thus offered him? Was it not from zeal to serve and exalt him that they said, “Lord wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did?” It was a zeal for Christ, yet not according to knowledge. Therefore did Jesus turn and rebuke them, saying, “Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of!” Following this high example, it is the duty of each successive age, discerning, in calm retrospect, the spirit of the age that went before, to testify reverently, yet earnestly, against the evil that good men did; and against the errors that good men have

taught. So God and Christ command the true hearts of this age, to declare wherein the zeal of the age that preceded it was not according to knowledge. That it was often true to its light, will not be questioned. Neither will many doubt that we now have more light. The Bible is accessible now, as it was not in Calvin's day. Freedom, not only to search the Scriptures, but to declare openly what God gives to each truth-seeker as their deepest harmony, is known and exercised to-day, as it was not even half a century ago.

I do not question the *zeal* that presents to this age the opinions of the past, concerning Christ our Lord and Master, and says, "hitherto shall ye come, toward an understanding of him, but no further! Stay in Calvin's harmony of the Scriptures! Cling to the inferences of Athanasius, and be content!" I have no controversy with the zeal, I do not deny the sincere earnestness of men who verily believe, and say, that their views of scripture are the only true ones, and that if a man deny their infallibility, he denies the Lord Jesus Christ. We honor them for their devotion to what they believe to be right. At the same time, we fear they forget what manner of spirit they are of. We honor more, Him who has bid his disciples trust themselves fearlessly to the spirit of truth, and let it guide them into all truth. We honor, far more, One soul, who has promised to be himself the immediate teacher of all who love him; and who says, "Wheresoever two or three are gathered in my name, there am I, in the midst of them." We come to him to-day. We turn us to his words. We pray to his Father, and our Father, for a zeal more and more according to knowledge. We are now, since our emancipation from the old, unwilling to bind ourselves by a new creed, other than Christ's very words. We have attained already, what seems to us, a far more perfect harmony of his words of eternal life, than that in the old creed. The old creed says (1) the Son of God is God himself; which seems like saying that Christ is either his own Son, or his own Father. (2) It says that the Bible declares it so; which seems like saying that the Bible teaches an absurdity. (3) It says that the mediator, between two, hopelessly alienated parties, is himself one of the parties to be reconciled; which seems like trifling with sacred things. (4) It says that a finite being, committed an infinite offence: which the Almighty can not pardon without an infinite atonement: and that this is consummated in the death of God himself. Yes, the death of God!

"God, the mighty Maker, died  
For man, the creature's, sin."

(5) Then, it affirms that only the *body* of Christ died on the Cross, when, as Christ said, He left the world and went to the Father; yet that death was an *infinite* atonement. All this and much more, appears to me an abortive attempt to reconcile the difficulties of Scripture, by bringing in still greater difficulties.

Unitarians find an encouraging sign of the return of all Christians to the creed of *the words of Jesus*, in the fact that the oldest and most honored formula of faith, read from Sunday to Sunday in Trinitarian churches, entitled "The Apostle's Creed," is purely Unitarian. If Unitarians could accept of any creed, other than God's word in Christ, they would adopt "The Apostle's Creed." They would, at least, be united in all that it says touching the relation, to each other, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Every Unitarian is ready to take upon his lips the words of that widely accepted formula of faith; attaching to them, of course, their scriptural meaning. "The Apostle's Creed" opens with the words, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth:" and the sentence which immediately follows it, is a fair statement of that element of Unitarian Christianity which presents itself next in order; viz., our views of Christ. It continues, "and in Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son, our Lord. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into the grave; (a reading authorized by the Episcopal Church, instead of the old reading, 'he descended into hell.')

The third day he rose from the dead: He ascended into heaven; and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the holy ghost; in the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of [all men;] and the life everlasting."

Having said thus much to the candid inquirer, I wish, once again, to give a strictly Unitarian answer to the first and last question of the Christian world; the question of Paul at his conversion, "Who art thou Lord?" Surely, all Christians would be glad if the view to be presented could truly meet and satisfy the highest ascriptions of honor, dignity and glory, that are offered to Christ in the Bible; and escape the necessity (which certain of our brothers think an "unavoidable necessity") of denying the absolute unity of the only and Eternal God. Could this be done, there would be a service rendered to humanity, which Trinitarians confess they have vainly sought to render; viz. this: without

abating one tittle of the reverence due to Jesus, we should restore the simplicity of the divine Unity: fix the mind of every man—of every child, in prayer, upon one person, one omnipresent Father. In a word, we should unveil a law of such absolute harmony, in divine truth, as to give strength and peace in all directions. We should drive away confusions, darknesses and doubts, that, by universal confession, have beset the devout seeker of God, in his attempts to tell the troubles of his soul to the three persons of a holy Trinity; to a triple Alliance,—instead of telling them only to the Father who seeth in secret, the Infinite and all-condescending *One*.

How truly has it been said (by Rev. G. H. Chapin, of New York city,) that we need that name "the Father" to signify the complete qualities of God's nature: to combine our sublimest, devoutest, tenderest ideas of him; and that "we need also an image of the Father, that this finite intellect can steadily see: that this wandering will and insufficient conscience can perceive nigh at hand: a Son of the Father, that this yearning and agitated heart can rest upon and love. That Son, that image is given us in Jesus Christ." To the question of the world "who art thou Lord," the Savior's clearest answer is, "I am Jesus... the Son of the Living God." What Christian, in these days, can doubt, that we should have had a different statement of the essentials of Christian faith, had the writing of the creed been given into the hands of such an one as Peter, the fisherman of Galilee, or of Paul the tent-maker of Antioch; instead of being entrusted to the hands of metaphysicians, like Athanasius and Calvin? Who can doubt, that *resemblance* to God, would be the meaning of those words "the Son of God;" the highest of all the expressions that Christ ever applies to himself, or allowed his disciples to apply to him? Who can doubt, that a heart simple and unschooled, would have given that phrase the meaning Christ gave it, viz, spiritual similitude and likeness to the Father, instead of freezing it into the barren abstraction of "eternal generation" from the Father. What do we know of the generation of soul from soul, or of life from life? Even that lowest life, of the insect or the flower. Absolutely nothing. We darken counsel by words without knowledge, when we argue about such things. The Father hath kept them in his own power. Men and brethren, we wander far from the plain and simple gospel, when we presume to tell how Christ proceeded from the Father. What has the Savior of sinners to say, in his own gospel, of the precise distinction between the

acts of creation and of birth ? Not a word. " Begotten not made," says the Orthodox creed. But who can define, with authority, what is " begotten " and what is " made " in the intelligent universe ? " Neither begotten nor made but proceeding," says the Athanasian creed, concerning the Holy Spirit. Who inspired Athanasius to teach us what was begotten of the Father, and what was made by Him, as distinguished from that which has proceeded from Him ? St. Paul says, (Gal. 4-4) " In the fulness of time, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law." Still, it is asked, " Can you rest your faith on a creature that God has made ? If St. Paul could, then why not I ? Brother, I rest my faith on God's truth and mercy ; as revealed through Christ his Son ! But who or what is a creature, as distinguished from one born of God ? or one proceeding from the Father ? Are you a creature ? and only a creature ? God has loved you from the foundation of the world. " As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God," says Paul to the Romans. St. John's word to Christians is, " Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." St. John never thought of asking our Lord Jesus, as he leaned on his bosom, whether he was a creature or a creator, or both. He did not " shudder at the thought " of putting his soul's whole faith in him, because, to his eye, he seemed to be a man. It was that which enchaind his soul. But *a mere man* : (Understand that this expression is never applied by Unitarians to Jesus Christ.) " Could you risk your salvation in the hands of a mere man ? " insists an objector. Brother, do you know what a man is ? all that is included in that word ? I do not. Peter tells me a man is " a partaker of the divine nature : " II. Epistle Peter 1-4. That, by your argument, would make a man to be the very and eternal God. Since, if I mistake not, you use these two phrases as synonymous, that Christ is " a partaker of the divine nature," and that he is " co-eternal and co-equal with the Father." St. James tells me that man is " made after the similitude of God." And you say that the expression " being in the form (or similitude) of God," as applied to Jesus by St. Paul, means, (I quote the words) " the state of dignity from which he descended to his state of humiliation upon earth." St. James does not read it so. " A mere man : "—I think I never fully saw the impiety of crowding metaphysics into the gospel of Christ, instead of leaving such foolish questions where Christ left them, and Paul cast them, until I met with an expression from the pen of Emanuel Swedenborg, a most spiritual and in-

fluent theologian, defining manhood, in a way, which, all reverent as it is in itself, does to my mind seem like blasphemy. Swedenborg has said, that *God was the only man*. Perhaps he meant simply to restate the Saviour's charge, —to us infants, germs, embryos, beginnings of men—to be perfect as our Father who is in heaven is perfect : to make the most High God the only perfect model for humanity. This startling assertion may be of service to us all, if it do but teach us to go to Jesus, for the only central and essential creed. We know not what man is, in *capacity* ; but only in manifestation. He may be infinite in one direction. To what he may rise, we know not ; to what he may fall, we know not. Neither do we know what we say, or whereof we affirm, when we declare that Christ, as to his nature and the essence of his being, was altogether human, or divine, or both. Every practical Christian should say, as the Unitarian says : Away with these abstractions—of science falsely so called. Away with these contentious, perplexing, church-dividing, hate-engendering abstractions. As a Unitarian, I repudiate, I ignore them. I cast them into the fire of Christ's truth and they are burned. I know not, I care not,—for it is not my business as a Christian to inquire—whether the soul which God sent into the world, with Truth and Love, to save my soul from sin, despair and death, was related to the Infinite Soul of the universe, by what one man would call 'birth,' or another man 'creation,' or another 'procession,' or another 'eternal generation.' The Scriptures say nothing of these things. They are altogether of lower origin. They are mere illusions of the over-curious brain.

Let it suffice us that our Lord has said, " All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." If a minister *plenipotentiary* presents his credentials, on arriving at the court of a nation, by which it appears that all power is given him to act for the king who sent him, what is it but an insult to the king himself, to make the reception of his minister depend upon the question whether he is bound by relations of blood to the King, and what are his family connections ; his associations and his inheritance, in the land from which he came to us ! He comes with authority to speak and act in the king's stead. He is the king's agent and representative. God is truth and Christ is truth. That, that is the relation with which we have to do ; and further speculations of ours are impertinent. Any surmisings or questionings concerning his nature, (other than his own words reveal,) are not of our business. Once for all, we answer the inquiry, Who is Jesus of

Nazareth, scripturally, by saying "He is the Son of God." "He is the Image of God," as he constantly called. Seeing him, we see all that man can now see of the Father. We are content to abide in the answer which Peter gave to his master, when our Lord was on his way to Jerusalem to die. Remember, Jesus not only approved Peter's answer on the spot, but he used these words, in his prayer to the Father, for Peter and the other apostles, a few days afterwards, viz: "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world." "Now have they known that all things, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of Thee: for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known *surely* that I came out from Thee." "For I have given them thy word!" A few days before this annunciation, that Peter and the other apostles "knew surely" all that God meant to reveal to man, concerning Christ and his mission,—our blessed Master, desiring—as a faithful teacher, to know whether his pupils had fully comprehended their great lesson,—put them the very question that has come before us now, "Whom say ye that I am?" Then Peter answered, and gave that reply, (beyond which no man has a right to call his brother's creed in question,) "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God!" Does the Unitarian acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God? He does. It is his gospel, and his life! If he does, he can stand against any opposition that God may call him to encounter. He hears a voice, that spake as never man spake, bidding him share in that approval of Peter; and of all who have like precious faith with him. That approval was; "Blessed art thou Simon, Bar Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, (that I am the son of God,) but my Father who is in heaven."

I have endeavoured to show that the *scriptural* idea of Sonship to God, is not to be looked for in that metaphysical notion, of which we know quite as little, *after* we have called it "eternal generation," as before. The Sonship of Jesus to Jehova, Jesus himself is never weary of defining. He himself never refers it to the fact of his being of one, 'substance' with the Father;—or to his possessing 'a oneness of essence,' with the Almighty;—or to his being "very God of very God;" but always, to his moral and spiritual *likeness* to God, and to his doing the works of his father; to his glorifying God among men, and exhibiting the true glory of God on the earth; to his shewing men the father's love and truth; to his enabling them thus *to see* God, *in* him, *by* him and



*through him.* Sonship to God is likeness to God. Take our Master at his word! He says, to the men who sought to kill him; "Ye are of your father the devil, and the deeds of your father ye will do. I do the deeds of *my* father and ye do the deeds of *your* father. If God were your father, ye would love me: for I do always those things which please him." Accept the recognition of this essential truth, that, as likeness to the evil one, is sonship to him,—likeness to God, is sonship to Him. This is the one thing that distinguishes the practical and Unitarian idea of Christ, from the "Evangelical" or metaphysical idea of him. On every page of the New Testament we have "Christ, the Image of God," Christ the brightness of God's glory, Christ our Righteousness, Christ our Life, our Way to the Father, our Truth and Love, our Alpha and Omega, our all in all, heir of God, fullness of the godhead bodily, God manifested in the flesh, seeing whom we see the Father, without whom we can do nothing. After this—how can we mistake the character of his sonship, as being a relation of similitude?—"Light of light;" a mediatorial relation, between God and man; a medium of vision?

Let me illustrate this idea by one or two figures not written in the Bible. We are so accustomed to attach our stereotyped, educational impressions, to Scripture figures, that only a rare self-command, a lofty spiritual elevation, enables a man to see them from a new point of view. As introducing these illustrations, may I state, what seem to me the essential, ground-facts of the Bible, that are common to all Christians, of all sects. I think they are these: God's image stamped at first on infant man;—man's abuse of his godlike powers; his becoming a sinner,—a wanderer from God, lost to the way of peace:—his long and fruitless efforts, in the earth, to make his way back to the Father, without help from on high;—his need of a helper, saviour and guide, to shew him the way to his Father's house; and convince him that God is willing to forgive, simply on his faith, his repentance and return to duty:—and finally, the power of that Saviour fully ~~to show~~ us the Father's state of mind towards us, in his *own* mind. Our vision of God, lies in the heart and life and death-love of his child Jesus. No Christian denies the power of Christ to win the most depraved, if they will only turn to him: to him, who is the same image of God that man had lost, being the full brightness of God's glory, to the human soul. These facts are true to all Christians.

My first illustration of the idea, that Christ's entire *godlike*—

ness constitutes the glory and power of his Christhood, is this : The pure and lucid *air* is a mediator between the eye and the evening star. Gazing upward, *through* the air, we see a work of God, to whose beauty and power we should otherwise be *lost*. Were the air not present, to convey the star's image to the eye, we should see nothing. Even so do we see God himself, through Christ our Medium of spiritual sight : or else we are lost to the knowledge of God.

Again : a pencil of rays is thrown through a lens, upon vacancy,—and we see no image. It is beyond our reach. But let a curtain fall so as to cross those rays of light, at a distance fitted to the limited reach and focus of the human eye, and lo ! a perfect outline. Form, coloring, shape and feature all are there ! We see it now : that for which we looked in vain before. Even so, Christ appears before us, bringing the infinite to our sight ; bringing us spiritually “the form of God.” The curtain God has hung down from heaven is the flesh, the body, the human frame, a man, suffering and tempted in all points like ourselves. Through God's paternal interest in us (whereby his every providence, though in the path of law, is a special providence) He has himself sent us this unspeakable gift : His pictured spirit of justice and love. By a special act of his will, he has produced for us his perfect portraiture and likeness, in the man Christ Jesus. I can readily believe that when God made this earth, he made it for his son Jesus Christ : as any one of you, that is a father, finds pleasure in making a toy for his child ;—a bat or a bow to be the ground-work of strength : the physical means, whereby the spirit and character and true life of a son may be exercised and developed. I can accept, literally, the scripture, (as applied to this our world of matter and of men) “All things were created by him and for him.” I suppose all things here, were, in the providence of God, created physically *for* Jesus Christ, and spiritually *by* him, as God's agent.

There is one more illustration of the sonship of Jesus, which I may not omit. One more statement of his divinity, as (by the scripture) residing in likeness to God, in temper and character :—and in no mere homogeneity of substance, or consubstantiality of essence, (figments of a scholar's brain !) This statement, even more fully than the others, will define his sonship as residing in resemblance of mind and temper ; in audible and visible God-likeness of soul : the humanly-perceptible, humanly-comprehensible fulness of our Father's life and love. “Of this fulness” (says John's gospel, 1-16,) “we have all received,” according to our faith. This fulness, Paul prays (in Ephesians, 3-19,) may be received by *all* Christians, as

It was by Jesus himself. Let Christ, God's truth, God's image, dwell in your hearts by faith (Paul says;) so that "ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is its breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which —passeth knowledge; that ye might be filled with *all the fulness* of God!" And again,—“till we *all* come to the stature of the *fulness* of Christ.” Thus Paul prays, that, in *every* Christian may dwell the fulness of the God-head; so that, in seeing a Christian, men may see the Father who is in heaven. There is the illustration: The Christ is the *Print* of God on human nature. The Father and the Son are as if the one were *seal* and the other *print*. Understanding that the seal is infinite and the print definite. The seal knows no limitations, while the print is given under all the limitations of humanity. The seal is not the print. Without the seal the print had never existed. The seal is the original and the print proceeds from the seal: (even as Christ declares that he “proceeded from” the Father.) Yet, he that has seen the print, knows the seal. The printed wax manifests the seal. It is the seal made manifest. So is Christ—“God manifest in (or on) the flesh.”

Thus is Christ the completed human *outline* of Deity, the harmonized ideal of a God whom no man hath directly seen, nor can see. Thus is Christ the beginning, the middle, and the end of our knowledge of God, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, of divinity for us. Thus, Christ and the Father, being two persons,—to human sight are one image. Not two nor three, but spiritually co-incident, and altogether one to human eyes.

“One God, in one person, and that person out-breathing Essential Love, (as a brother, Rev. E. H. Sears, has said) this is the God whom we see in the face of Jesus Christ. When our minds have deeply studied the Gospel, and our souls conceived the true spirit of the life of Jesus, we lie lowly in God's hand, and dare to look up to him; yea, we come trustingly to him, through this transparent medium, this mediator. Then do we receive forgiveness and atonement and regeneration; for, as the sun loves to make his image in the still lake, so God loves to look into the pure heart and make his image there. And there it remains, and there it glows, a living light within: and then we worship, for we cannot help it. We worship all the while, for the image can never go out, in him that lives unto God. We pray without ceasing. The soul in Christ always yearns after union with God, and always finds it, and this *is* worship.

When the man lies down at night,—there—mixed up with all his thoughts, his loved idea remains ; and when he wakes in the morning, he finds himself in prayer.”

Finally,—If there is mystery in our view of Christ, it is mystery in the scriptural sense : viz., truth beyond truth, waiting to be revealed. There is unknown truth, but no mysticism. There is no self-contradiction. There is no departure from logical consistency. There is nothing unreasonable. There is much that is beyond the reach of our present powers ; but nothing that contradicts aught that we already know and see of God’s works and ways. Nothing that does violence to the common sense of men ; or which denies, for one moment, that all truth is in harmony with all truth. The more we study the gospel of Jesus Christ, the more are we persuaded that it holds, for man, the very truth, the absolute religion. Here we have, too, a religion of progress, fitted to go through all worlds with man, as a growing child of God : and bidding him, and guiding him, to be perfect even as his Father who is in heaven is perfect.

It is a glorious thought, worthy of an infinite Paternity, that, into other peopled worlds, differing in their capacities and needs from ours, God has sent expressions of himself : Sons of his love : mediators between them and Him : that God may have given, to some other world than ours, a Christ ; to be, to their powers of outward vision, one of their brethren, tempted in all points as they are ; yet unveiling God to their spiritual sight : giving them all they need ; a complete image of Him,—whom to know and to love, is to be delivered from evil, and to have eternal life and peace. Such a thought will not be without its use, if it aid us to perceive that an image of God, is not God : though containing, for a single race of intelligent beings, the delineated ‘fulness of the God-head bodily’ : so that he who will earnestly behold it, sees the Father. He sees, by study and duty done, all that he is capable of beholding of the Father. And, by beholding and worshipping, he is transformed into the same image.

It is because we have not yet become intimate with the inner and true Life of Jesus, that men are so divided about him. It is because we *say* we see him, but do not,—that our blind and bitter contentions remain with us. We must have the same mind in us that was also in Christ Jesus. We must bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, before we can understand, or believe, all he meant, when he so calmly said “I and my Father are one ;” and then, indignantly, denied the charge of making himself equal with

God : expostulating with bigotry and hatred itself, and saying (in the words that immediately follow) "If ye called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came—as it came to Moses and Samuel and Isaiah—how say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, *I am the Son of God*?" What shall a Christian say, when men take up, as an argument for the absolute deity of Jesus, those remarkable words of his infinite aspiration "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, i. e. God;"—words that reveal a thirst for truth beyond truth, and for grace upon grace, in the Lord Jesus Christ. Growing in wisdom as he grew in stature, for thirty years, he had already come to be, to *human* vision perfect. He, "as the head of every man" is to *us*, altogether holy, just, pure, true, lovely. Never shall we see the faintest shadow on his glory, the glory of the *first* begotten,—as if it were the glory of the *only* begotten—of the Father, full of grace and truth. Yet has he revealed to us, that *he* can, of his own self, do nothing. He is utterly and forever dependent on his Father, and our Father. He will be forever in advance of us, still beckoning us to follow him, from height to height, nearer and ever nearer to the Most High.

In this attempted delineation of my own view of Christ, I have not gone over the interminable field of textual controversy. And yet, have I not presented a simple, scriptural, self-consistent idea of Christ, in his godlikeness? This, if faithfully followed out, before an open gospel, in the spirit of truth and love, will reconcile (with each other and with the absoluteness of the Divine Unity,) all that glorious procession of texts, that give Christ his glory : and ascribe "blessing and honor and praise, both to Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever." There is no text giving honor to Christ in the Bible, that our view of him, as the only true, and so, to men, the only begotten—Son of God, does not demand and require. Though the scripture forbids us to preach his *deity*, the godlikeness or *divinity* of Christ, is our strength and our song, and our only hope. His birth and his death are no longer enigmas to us ; though, when spoken of the Eternal and everlasting God, they are enigmas indeed. We now see how the word (or wisdom) of God, of which we also are capable, was "made flesh" was "manifest in the flesh." We understand how, in knowing himself, from his cradle, he knew what was, and ought to be, in man. Humanity in all its phases and temptations was an open book to him. It is vain to argue that he was *worshipped* on the

earth, as orthodox authorities declare, when we know that Peter rebuked him a few days before his crucifixion ; and that he was both despised and rejected of men ; and at his death-hour, the apostles all forsook him and fled. They worshipped him as Cornelius worshipped Peter, but not as God. We see how the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, is identical with God's grace to us. Though not God absolutely, we see how appropriately, when God is Love, he is called God with us, in us, for us. In Christ there shines for man, the justice, the wisdom, the power, the patience, the love, the whole, of God. Here is not one feature alone, as a popular creed declares. Here is not, mercy, alone ; but in Christ is God's justice, too. He comes not, as some say he comes, to hide us from God's wrath, or from aught that is in God ; but to *show* us the Father, breathing love in every feature ; the Father, only angry as Christ was angry with the Pharisees ; and as Christ and men must be angry with disobedience : must be forever *opposite* to known sin ; to all iniquity ; to all wrong. God treats the wicked as Jesus Christ did Judas, and not otherwise. Until our brethren can accept Christ's revelation, that the man who has seen *him* has seen the human *fulness* of the Godhead, including justice and "wrath,"—seen the Father, and not one single feature of the godhead,—let them at least confess that our view of Christ sets him *as high* in honor as their own.

In conclusion : you perceive, men and brethren, how Christ is, to us, the Son of God, the Image of God, born a man, and divinely filled with all the fulness of God. We can lean on the bosom of such a Saviour in the hour of death, and know in whom we have believed. Of all ideas, this, that we have of Christ (as the Son of God,) is the clearest, the simplest, the most reliable. It is the immediate jewel of our souls. There is no double nature in him ; brothers, sisters. We have a Saviour : one who saith to us, when we commune with him, "I have not called you servants, but I have called you friends : for, whosoever doeth the will of my father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother." Glorious thought ; full of life and power and immortality ! More glorious Person ! When thou art spiritually with us in the night watches,—when thou dost tread life's dark waters by our side, more living and more present than the dearest earthly friend, saying to us "Be of good cheer ; it is I ; be not afraid : " then do we know that our redeemer liveth.

Son of God, give thy strength to each soul here ; for we are ready to say, Thou art our all. I can bear the cross

with thee : I will lay down ~~my~~ life for thy sake !

Seeing thee god-like, we see the Father. We realize, we experience the power of thy words, " This is life eternal, to know the only true God, by Jesus Christ whom God has sent us." May thy lofty and lowly spirit, Oh Jesus, dwell in us all, and help us to do thy will : which, thou sayest, is not thine but the Father's ! May the ever-present God help us to honor the Son, even as we honor the Father, in the keeping of his commandments ! Dear Master, give us thine approval at the judgment-seat on high. Say to us then, that, in blessing the victim of sin, we have comforted thee. In cheering the home of the widow, and the heart of the out-cast, may we hear thy words, " Inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these my brethren and my sisters, ye do it unto me !"

Yes : He that seeth thee, will see the Father.

*The Religion of Labor.*

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A

DISCOURSE,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH

OF THE

HON'BLE ABBOT LAWRENCE,

PREACHED, NOVEMBER 4, 1855,

IN THE MISSION ROOM

OF THE

Unitarian Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in India.

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BY

C. H. A. DALL,

MISSIONARY OF THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

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1855.



*Calcutta, 6th November, 1855.*

TO THE REV. C. H. A. DALL,

DEAR SIR,—It would give us much gratification to obtain your consent to have the discourse that you delivered on Sunday last, published in form. Pray oblige us, and believe us,

Very truly, your friends,

R. L.

A. H. R., JR.

F. A. T.

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**R E P L Y.**

GENTLEMEN AND FRIENDS,—Though the discourse which you ask to see in print was prepared under a press of other duties, and cannot elsewhere expect the charitable estimation which you give it, I accede to your request, in the hope that its *facts* may be seeds of good, as life ever tends to quicken life.

I remain, Dear Friends,

Your Friend, and Pastor,

C. H. A. DALL.

*Calcutta, November 7, 1855.*

# SERMON.

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I. EPISTLE OF ST. JOHN, *Chap. ii., v. 29*:

*"Every one that doeth righteousness is born of God."*

And from the same Epistle, *Chap. iv., vs. 7 and 8*:

*"Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God;—and*

*"He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love."*

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RELIGION,—Christianity,—the only subject here, will be illustrated to-day by the life of a man: not a clergyman, but a layman; not a saint or recluse, but a man of the people; a clerk at first, then a merchant, a manufacturer, a promoter of great public works, a patron of science, a senator, a statesman, a unitarian Christian—but above all—a man.

Led by Christ's Spirit in the text, I seek again to answer the highest question humanity is asking, namely, What is Religion? What is Christianity? In the text, we hear Christ saying, It is Truth in man; it is Love in man: it is God's wisdom, believed on and practised in this world:—it is whatever binds men together in true relations. This is to-day's answer:

than which none could be grander, none more nobly practical. The Americans here are nearly all merchants: and those present who are not so, may all the more need the argument of a Christian merchant's life, to get broader views of Christianity: to perceive its probable influence, if accepted, upon the common life, and the industrial life, of India. Listen, I pray you, listen to one who now rests from his labors, and whose works only remain to speak for him. Hear one speaking from an honored grave; from heaven rather; and saying, Brothers, fellowmen, with all my imperfections and my faults, I tried to be a man. Forgive my errors, and avoid them; but, what God gave me of honest Christian usefulness,—take that and improve upon it: especially wherein it may serve to embody Religion in common and mercantile and laborious life. So speaks to us the spirit of one whose death is widely mourned beyond the sea.

Not to miss the mind of Christ, I would first ask St. John, what Religion is?—ask him who leaned on the bosom of Jesus at the Last Supper, and followed him on his way to the cross:—than whom none better understood the Christ of God:—his character and his purposes;—than whom none more deeply loved our Lord; nor had higher authority to speak his Word; nor looked

oftener or more truly into the deep places of his heart. I ask St. John what was esteemed by his Master to be the burden of his mission ; what was the Christianity of Christ ; the essence of his teaching : the aim of his being ?—And his reply, as is the text, is this : He taught us God is love, God is truth ; devoted personal love, unshaken, practical truth ; and that these unite all men : these *religionize* the nations. Love and Truth bind man to man, and all to God. Because of their exalting, educating, harmonizing, binding power, justice and love are *called* Religion ; a word which signifies the Bond, the Tie, by which distracted and dissevered, hating and hated men, love one another ; so that despairing, bleeding humanity is bound up again and healed ; is made one family ; happy, for Earth and for Heaven ; dear to each other and to the Only Living and True God, the All-Father ; whose chosen worship is the Love of His children for Him. Christ proposed to himself, as St. John declares, no less a ministry than this : He came to make men, men ; and so gathered into one code, all spiritual law. He caught up into a few grand principles,—*one* principle rather,—all that makes life holy and divine. He declared the mind of God so simply, that a child can understand it ; so deeply that no human intellect can exceed it. He declared the power of Love

to bind obedient humanity together as gravitation binds the countless orbs,—suns, planets, comets,—all ‘the dread magnificence of heaven.’ Christ, under God, set himself to this work, in word and life; and, as all Christians believe, accomplished it; and truly said “It is finished,” before he died: thus making himself a boundless creditor to every human heart. Religion—Christianity—then, is no dogma or set of dogmas; but a True Life, loving and holy. Opinions that are of no use to better the condition of men are irreligious: *irreligious* because empty of power to *bind* men to God and to each other in true society; a union for time and for eternity. Let no Christian deny, henceforth, what the beloved disciple of Christ so explicitly declared, viz., that every man,—past, present and to come,—who has done, or does, or shall do, good; do right, do honor to his mission as a man, a child of God; he is born of God: is a religious man; is a Christian. He is so, in virtue of his loving truth and man, as Christ and God love truth and humanity. It is not he who cannot sign his brother’s creed, but he that loveth not his brother, who is an infidel. He knows not God: for God is Love. The Life of *God* is seen in religion between man and man; in that generous kindness which alone rivets society together; and is its divine cement. The truth-speaking, calm, considerate father of a

family shows Religion,—yes, Christianity,—in wise paternal discipline : above all by that even-handed, mild decision, whereby his children and dependants have learned mutual regard, forbearance and self-respect. The reliable merchant whose word is his bond, and who inspires confidence in the mercantile profession by his sterling and immovable integrity, *has just so much religion in him* as he has of honor and truth. He binds society together. Sustained by such men, Commerce serves Christianity ; and wealth becomes more and more a redeeming influence on earth. Let the merchant have as true a regard for God's honor and approbation, as he now has for man's honor and praise, and he is a Christian in full measure. Religion towards God alone is not Christianity. Religion towards man alone is not Christianity. We need both. We want charity and piety to be perfect men. Alas! for him who has philanthropy without prayer : and woe be to him who forgets in praying, to say, with Rammohun Roy and other noble souls, that "The true way to serve God is to do good to men."

I have thus answered, out of the heart of the New Testament, the solemn question : What is Religion ? Let me proceed to illustrate the definition.

One of our Father's children, as we said, has lately lived and died in a way to teach men a broader definition of Religion. Let us learn the lesson ; and improve upon our teacher if we can. In order to do this concisely, I will quote some things that were lately said of Mr. Lawrence to a crowded auditory in New England by a finished scholar and widely-honored man, Edward Everett ; the intimate personal acquaintance and associate of Mr. Lawrence, and his friend for forty years. The value of Mr. Everett's statements lies in their embodying simple and universal principles, in touching facts ; such as are usually known only to bosom friends ; things all the dearer and more sacred on that account, to your private heart's need and to mine.

Mr. Everett declares to us, that " Mr. Lawrence was a merchant of the class that does not look upon commerce merely as a pursuit of private gain. He had far higher views. He considered it as one of the great callings of humanity." He says, " I once had a conversation with Mr. Lawrence on the subject of the mercantile profession. I was going to deliver a lecture, before one of our public institutions, and I went and asked him what I should say to the young men who should hear me."

' Tell them, Sir,' said he, ' that this Commerce

in which so many of us are engaged, is no selfish pursuit : tell them it is an honorable calling : tell them it was the hand of God which spread out those great oceans, not to separate, but to unite the nations : that the winds which waft our sails breathe from Him ; that all this variety of climate and product was meant to form the communication of friendly exchange between distant lands.'

" These were his views and he carried them out through the whole of his career. His business life passed over several of those great convulsions which shake the pillars of the commercial world : but they never shook the foundations of his prosperity, because he laid them so deeply down upon honor and truth. Mr. Lawrence was never ashamed of his calling, nor of the humble beginnings with which he started in it. He resembled the Merchant Princes of Florence, who, when they dwelt in palaces, and gave the law to Italy, used to keep, as trophies upon their walls, *the iron cranes* with which they and their ancestors had lifted bales of merchandize into their lofts with their own hands. I saw yesterday (continues Mr. Everett) a young gentleman who told me that only six weeks ago, Mr. Lawrence took out of his waistcoat pocket a pair of scissors, and said ' these served me well when I began business.' "



I need not remind the Americans, who hear me, how Mr. Lawrence rejoiced in the just approbation of his fellow-citizens of New England. For aught I know he valued even too highly the praise men bestowed upon his success in extending manufacturing industry so mightily among her hills and streams and inland towns.

Yet he did it often in a way that shewed him to be moved, if by hopes of personal profit, still by a generous, aye, a religious patriotism ; and by a belief that Providence, God's will, had designed those United States to become one people, industrious, intelligent and innocently happy, by their own labor ; by an industry which not only employs for good, the sons and daughters of the land and sets up the manufacturers,—each little family in a home of its own, with a hard-earned and all the more enjoyed sufficiency ;—but creates a home market for the agriculturists, and delivers the small farmer and his children from the danger of oppression by any landlord. In his laudable pride of patronage and well doing, this man, once a poor boy, built a city and called it by his own name, a city of factory palaces, the City of Lawrence, the foundations of which were laid by the hand of him who lived to see it large and populous.

This is one way, but not the very highest, in which this man shows us the ' binding bless-

ing' that comes of anywise fulfilling the designs of Providence upon earth. Not only was Mr. Lawrence a promoter of manufactures in New England, of the well-paid industry of his country—and to an extent hard to be believed in quiet India—but, he has helped to bind distant States of the American Union to that one in which he was born, Massachusetts, by leading men to join him in extending railways and other modes of rapid inter-communication. Many years ago he expressed to Mr. Everett the hope that he would live to see the States around the Upper Mississippi, 1,500 miles off in the far Northwest, bound by iron links to Boston as their Eastern sea-port; and he lived to see the fulfilment of that prophecy.

But his care for his country did not find its limit in her material prosperity. A cause which he felt to be more important than that, was the cause of Popular Education. He helped to make common schools, free city schools, good enough for the brightest children of the most favoured families. Having accomplished this in Boston, or aided in its accomplishment, he kept his own children steadily in attendance there:—so that you saw the sons of Abbot Lawrence sitting side by side with the sons of servants, in the free school, while he went to England, at the call of

the United States to represent his country as her minister at the Court of St. James. Perhaps the benefactions of Mr. Lawrence to the Public Schools and other Educational Establishments of his native state, may be said to have culminated in his adding a new branch to the University of Cambridge. To her Schools of Law, Medicine and Divinity, he added a School of Science : now known as the "Lawrence Scientific School." Some 200,000 Rupees, I think, of his well-earned wealth, have been given to this single object ; by one who, while reckoned among the wealthiest men of perhaps the wealthiest city in America, could refer often and gratefully to the day when he entered Boston 'a poor, friendless, boy,' on foot, bearing all that he had,—a change of clothing and one week's board,—in a cotton handkerchief.

Of Mr. Lawrence's care to promote the cause of true science, Mr. Everett thus speaks : " Was not that, my friends, a worthy application of wealth ? Need any nobler object than this be proposed for its employment ? Material prosperity is perishable ; but Truth and Science are as eternal as the everlasting heavens ; and whoever shall promote them, his memory will live, in immortal minds, when those heavens themselves shall pass away."

With regard to Mr. Lawrence's entrance into public life, I must quote again from the same

speaker a few words. " He served a year or two in the Municipal Councils, a year or two in the State Legislature, and once or twice, short terms, in the General Congress of his country. He was then invited to a seat in the Cabinet, among the confidential advisers of the President ; which he promptly declined. He was next offered the mission to England. *That* he would not accept till he had held it for a long time under advisal. While he was hesitating he called upon me. He was good enough to say that as I had been over the ground before him, he wished to converse with me, supposing I could give him some practical information. It would depend in some degree, he said, upon what I should tell him, whether he accepted the mission or not. ' In the first place Mr. Everett,' said he, ' I wish to know, whether there is any foundation for that ancient jest, that a foreign minister is a man sent abroad to tell lies for his government ; for if that is the case, it is no place for me. I never told a lie yet, and I shall not begin at the age of 50.' "

" Mr. Lawrence was so far satisfied with what I told him of my own experience and conduct abroad, as to say that I had removed one of his great objections. I urged him to go. And this country, I may say the *world*, knows the success

that attended his mission to England. It was equal, certainly, to that of any of his predecessors, living or dead. His genial manner, his affable demeanor, his princely hospitality, his ready eloquence on all public occasions,—not dull, studied harangues, not long disquisitions, but brief and genial, touching on the pertinent subjects of the day,—just lightly moving the heart-strings of international sympathy between the mother country and ours,—honestly won upon English hearts, more perhaps than had ever been done before.”

I believe the beneficence of Mr. Lawrence was often of that heart-felt sort that deprecates publication. I have purposely left here little room to enlarge upon it. Like that pattern philanthropist, his brother Amos, the Howard of New England, whom he has gone to meet, beyond the grave, Abbot Lawrence loved to cheer the widow and the fatherless. Absorbed in engrossing mercantile and public business, he did not, like his brother, spend much of his time among the out-cast poor, or in refuges and asylums; but I think it is truly said of him, that “if his means were large, his heart was larger. With the fortune of a prince, his beneficence was princely.” “At one time” (says Mr. Everett) “his bounty fell in copious showers; at other times it distilled like the dews of heaven, softly and

imperceptibly. Where it was necessary to encourage other slower men, he gave publicly, as he ought: but where this was not necessary, his bounty followed humble want to the retreats where it suffered, and was seen only by the eye of God and by its earthly beneficiary."

Finally my friends, you know what must have been the perennial source to this man, of his public and private virtue and prosperity. It was Religion, Truth and Love, from God: Not *a* religion, but Religion, gave Mr. Lawrence the principles of his conduct. Truth was the rule of his so progressive life. Thus God combined all the forces of his mind and will into one harmonious onward course. God's *truth* made him "the father that he was; the brother, the husband, the friend, the relative, the neighbour, the citizen,—the great, good man." And this, his practical truthfulness, it is, which will cause his memory to live and to be a blessing.

I must deny myself the sad satisfaction of detailing, ever so briefly, now, the touching facts of a distressing illness, under whose discipline his afflicted family, through the space of several weary months, perceived him to be passing away. God was with him then, a very present help in trouble; and, at that time, seemed more conspicuously with

him than in all his previous life. Would that you and I could have heard him tell, on a dying pillow, of his faith in God, the only God, through Christ his Holy Child. Sustained by the thought of duty done, he felt his own unworthiness to be called a disciple of Jesus; who gave not only his wealth, but his whole time, his whole thought, his whole power, to walk, in spirit as God walks among men.

I regard this man, of whom I have but too partially and briefly spoken,—barely mentioning that he belonged to that dear household of our Christian faith, called Unitarian;—I regard him as a noble specimen of a practical Christian; considering the temptations which in this age beset mercantile life. The extent of influence he had was that of any king. He was indeed a merchant prince. And well did he illustrate the saying that, “Christianity pours contempt upon dominion, except as an instrument whereby the highest may serve the lowest.” My native friends, if you believe in such a Religion, such a Christianity, dare to say so. Dare gratefully and openly to give Christ the honor of your testimony, the honor he deserves. Honor Jesus, who brought you this religion out of heaven. And my friends,—not natives of this ‘land of the morning,’—bear in mind the nobly useful life, and peaceful, hopeful

entrance into immortality, of one who was,—what you each may be,—a true man, an honest and generous merchant, and a Christian believer. Brothers, would you, too, be followed by blessings to your grave?—Yes. Then scatter blessings as you go: industry and knowledge, healing and help, to all within your reach. That thou doest do quickly: for the time is short: and only he that doeth righteousness,—only he that loveth,—is born of God.

Forget, if you must, that such a man, as the honored dead, has lived. Doubt, if you must, whatever we have said of Abbot Lawrence that is peculiar to him. But forget not, doubt not the truth, that God speaks to all men, through faithful lives. Spirit of the departed, we will believe, through thee, that the great object of Religion upon earth is to make men one family, one fraternity, one holy church; looking to one Head, under God, in their highly exalted brother, Jesus Christ. Risen Spirit of a faithful man, teach us that God is love: and that fraternization is Religion upon earth: that religion dwells in whatever brings men nearer to each other and into heavenly relations.

There is hope for religion, in binding the Pacific to the Atlantic, at the Isthmus of Darien. There is hope for religion, in the union of many



empires, as united states. There is hope for religion, when England and India join hands, with iron grasp, at the Isthmus of Suez. There is hope for religion in the pulsation of a common heart through England and America by a telegraphic nerve that may yet be laid, beneath the Atlantic. And a yet wider hope for Christ, in the possible extension of the same sentient, auditory nerve around the globe : giving the varied nations one thought, one speech. Soul of the departed, say if there be not religion in all true labor, all right industry ? Tell us, if it be true, that Labor, Commerce, on high and Christian principles,

“ Rivets man to man,  
And makes us all as one.”

Suffer us not, Oh ! Infinite Jehovah, to be misled by the error, (if it be an error,) that there is religion in making all people innocently busy and happy ; that their being compelled to labor, by right appeals to right motives, is a consummation of Thy Will, Thy Holy Will, in man. Is there not religion in truly systematizing a nation's industry and so developing the manhood and self-trust which shall be only trust in truth, and duty, and in Thee ? Build thou up among us that Christian Institution, diviner even than the church, the Home ;—homes doubly sweet as earned by honest toil. As human

creeds lose their power over men and yield them more and more to 'the simplicity which is in Christ,' may man delight to work, as Thou God workest, and rejoice in his toil, as Thou in thine ! Seekers of truth and lovers of your kind, you well know that 'though argument may fail to convince, none can resist the *'divinity of goodness.'* The sight of goodness,—as it is in Jesus and his disciples ;—'the sight of human goodness, is God's chosen instrument of conversion.' Go hence, friends of Jesus, resolved to be good, and to do good, as you have never yet been and done. Then shall it be said of you, when you are gone, as a funeral orator lately said of the merchant whose decease we have now commemorated ;

"The dead are like the stars, by day ;  
Withdrawn from mortal eye,  
But not extinct,—they hold their way  
In glory through the sky."

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NOTE.—The Rev. Dr. Lothrop, of the Brattle-square Church, in Boston—wherein the Hon. Abbot Lawrence attended Divine worship during his life, thus speaks of Mr. Lawrence's birth and early home :—

"Abbot Lawrence was born in Groton, in the County of Middlesex, Mass., on the 16th of December, 1792. His ancestors were among the first settlers of that town, and all through its records the name of the family occurs in honorable connections. His father, a revolutionary patriot, who was summoned from his scarcely finished bridal, to fight the battles of his country, was a man of stern integrity and sincere piety. His mother was a woman of excellent understanding, and a deep sense of her responsibilities as a Christian mother. From them and their instructions and example came the important influences that formed his character. He passed the years of his boyhood, enjoying no advantages but those which the district schools and a then humble and unendowed academy in his native town afforded. Thus born and reared, surrounded by such influences, having such

and only such advantages of education, he came to Boston in October, 1808, and on the 8th of that month entered the store of his brother Amos, as clerk and apprentice. Shortly after completing his majority, on the 1st of January, 1814, he entered into business with his brother; and thus commenced the firm of A. and A. Lawrence. Owing to the war and the political condition of the country, the business was not successful at first, and at the close of the year Mr. Amos Lawrence offered to release his brother from the partnership and assume all the liabilities of the firm; but the latter declined thus to escape his share of responsibility. This incident, while it is eminently characteristic of the benevolence of the one brother, and the manly honor and indomitable energy of the other, is alike honorable to both.

But though he declined to be released from the commercial liabilities that rested upon the firm, and would in some way have borne his part in meeting and discharging them, Mr. Lawrence did, at this time—the early part of the year 1815—think seriously of retiring from the pursuits of commerce, and entering upon a widely different course of life. War was raging in this country and in Europe, and our Commissioners at Ghent were making such slow progress that there seemed little prospect of any speedy return of peace. In the path of commercial enterprise everything looked dark and unpromising. Mr. Lawrence's patriotic impulses were quick and strong. He was the son of a revolutionary soldier. He was already an officer in one of the most prominent military organizations of the town, and in that capacity had taken an active and honorable part in the military defenses and preparations which the militia and citizens of Boston were several times called upon to make, against expected attacks of the enemy. This experience, his own consciousness, and the observation of others, told him that he had energy and talent peculiarly fitted for military command; and he was so far determined to change his plan of life, that he applied to the war department for a commission to the regular army of the United States. Before this application could be acted upon, or before any answer was returned to it, peace was declared, and the whole aspect of things changed.

It was only a fortnight before the commencement of his last sickness, that Mr. Lawrence, in speaking reverently of the evidences which every thoughtful man must find in his own life, of the overruling Providence of God, related to me this incident as an illustration of it in his own case. Had he entered the army, we might have heard of him on the plains of Buena Vista, or at the storming of Monterey, or at the capture of Mexico; or perhaps we might not have heard of him at all. The toil, exposure, and fatigue of a military life, might have dug for him a grave too early filled for distinction and renown to gather around the name of its occupant. Fortunately for him and for us, a good Providence held him and led him onward in a path where more peaceful, glorious, and beneficent triumphs crowned his labors than were ever achieved on the field of battle."

# CHRISTIANITY

## IN THE WORDS OF CHRIST;

BEING

HIS OWN STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. GOD.            | 4. MAN.         |
| 2. CHRIST.         | 5. SIN.         |
| 3. THE HOLY GHOST. | 6. FORGIVENESS. |

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PUBLISHED BY THE

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1855.

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*Price—One Anna.*



## JESUS SAYS;

1. "Worship the Father."—(John iv. 23.) "When ye pray, say *Our Father*:" (Luke xi. 2.) "In that day (when Jesus has ascended) ye shall *ask me nothing*:" (John. xvi. 23.) "My Father is *greater than I*." (John xiv. 28.) "*I pray* to my Father:" (Matt. xxvi. 53.) "*My* Father is *your* Father, *my* God is *your* God." (John xx. 17.) "The true worshippers shall *worship the Father* in Spirit and in Truth." (John iv. 23.)

2. "Honor the Son."—(John v. 23.) "He is the Son of *man*," (John v. 27.) "The Son *can do nothing* of himself:" (John v. 19.) "Why callest thou *me* good, there is none good *but One, that is God*." (Matt. xix. 17.) "Not that *any man* hath seen the Father save *he* which is of God." (John vi. 46.) "Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and *sent* into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, *I am the Son of God*?" (John x. 36.) "One is your *Master*, even *Christ*:" (Matt. xxiii. 8.) "Ye call me *Master* and Lord, and ye say well, *for so I am*." (John xiii. 13.) "It is written, the testimony of *two* (witnesses) is true: I am *one*, and the *Father*, which hath sent me, is *another* (witness.) (John

viii. 18.) “ All should *honor the Son* even as they honor the Father.” (John v. 23.) Compare John x. 30, with John xvii. 22. “ I and my Father *are one*: (and) The glory which thou (God) gavest me, *I have given them*, (my disciples) that *they may be one even as we are one*.” “ Whoso *doeth the will* of my Father, the same is *my brother* :” (Matt. xii. 50.)

3. “ **Walk in the Spirit.**”—(Galatians v. 16.)—(John xx. 22.) “ God giveth *not* the Spirit by *measure* unto him :” (the Christ.) (John iii. 34.) “ He, Christ, shall *baptize you with the Holy Ghost* (πνευμα, Spirit) and with fire.” (Matt. iii. 11.) “ *Teach* all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy (πνευμα) Spirit; *Teaching* them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.” (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) “ David *spoke by* the Holy (πνευμα) Spirit. (Mark xii. 36.)—Compare Matt. vii. 11, with Luke xi. 13. “ Your Father which is in heaven, will give *good things* to them that ask him.” (Parallel passage in Luke.) “ Your heavenly Father will give the *Holy* (πνευμα) *Spirit* to them that ask him.”

“ The *words* which I speak unto you, they are (πνευμα) Spirit and they are Life.” (John vi. 63.)

4. “ **Honor all Men.**”—(1 Peter ii. 17.) “ I (Jesus Christ) am a *man*, that hath told you the truth ;”

(John v. 23.) "The Sabbath was *made for man*, not man for the Sabbath." (Mark ii. 27.) "In an *honest and good heart* (let all men) having heard the word, keep it." (Luke viii. 15.) "A *good man*, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth *good things*." (Matt. xii. 35) "Blessed are the pure in heart:" (Matt. v. 8.) "Be *perfect* even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. v. 48.) (The prodigal said) "Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee: but the father said, *my son* was dead, but is alive again, he *was lost*, but *is found*." (Luke xv. 24.) "*Whosoever* doeth the will of God, the same is my (Christ's) brother." (Mark iii. 35.)

5. "**Hate Sin.**"—(Heb. i. 9.) "The disciples asked Jesus, saying, 'Master, who did sin, this man or *his parents* that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, '*neither* this man nor his parents; but that the works of God might be manifested in him.'" (John ix. 2.) "Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?" "The Householder (God) said unto them, 'an *enemy* hath done this.'" (Literally, *my enemy man* (*ἐχθρος ἄνθρωπος*) hath done this. (Matt. xiii. 27 and 28.) "Out of *the heart*, proceed evil thoughts. (Matt. xv. 19.) "Had I not come and spoken unto them they had not known sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin." (John xv. 22.)



"He that doeth evil hateth the light. He that doeth truth cometh to the light. This is the condemnation that *men loved darkness* : " (John iii. 19.)

**6. "Forgive and be forgiven."**—(Luke vi. 37.)

"After this manner pray ye, 'Father *forgive* us our debts, *as we forgive* our debtors.' " (Matt. vi. 12.) "*If ye forgive* men their trespasses, *your heavenly Father will also forgive* you your trespasses." (Matt. vi. 14.) "When ye stand praying, *forgive*, if ye have aught against any ; *that your Father* also, which is in heaven, *may forgive your trespasses*." (Mark xi. 25.) "I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, *for she hath loved much*." (Luke vii. 47.) "Father forgive them, they know not what they do." (Luke xxiii. 34.) "'Lord how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?' And the Lord said, 'not until seven times but until seventy times seven.'" (Matt. xviii. 21.)

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**SUMMARY OF PURE TEACHING BY JESUS  
CHRIST HIMSELF.**

1. God, the only God, is our Heavenly Father, the source of all blessings, to whom alone we should pray.
2. Christ, his Son, his unspeakable Gift, must not be worshipped as God. He forbids that we should

pray to him. He is our Master and Guide in Spiritual things ; our elder brother.

3. The Holy Ghost is either the Father himself, or it is God's Spirit ; his Wisdom, Love and Holy Life seen in Christ and waiting for all Men.

4. Man, capable of God's likeness and life, is greater than institutions, even the Sabbath ; though subject for ever to every word (law) of God. Were man's nature depraved or ruined or essentially wicked, St. Paul could not *condemn* men for being " without *natural* affection." (Rom. i. 31.)

5. Sin originates in man's free choice of evil. Evil is, in God's hands, our faithful and needed discipline.

6. Deeply to love God, and heartily to choose the way of God's mercy towards men, is to blot out our sins. To love truly, compels us to forgive ; which is to be forgiven by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Devotional Series.

No. I.

# P R A Y E R

## FOR THE CHRISTIAN LIFE;

ADAPTED

TO THE SEVERAL SEASONS OF

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. MORNING.      | 4. TROUBLE.      |
| 2. EVENING       | 5. THANKSGIVING. |
| 3. CLOSING YEAR. | 6. NEW YEAR.     |

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# IN THE MORNING,

SAY ;

How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God ! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

For with thee is the fountain of life : in thy light shall we see light.

O ! Continue thy loving-kindness to them that love thee, and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

I laid me down and slept ; I awaked ; for the Lord sustained me.

O THOU, who hast set the solitary in families, and joined us to each other by the strong bonds of domestic affection, we rejoice to recognize these among the higher and more sacred ties which bind us to thee and thy service. It is our most precious privilege to come to thee in worship ; to pour forth our souls to thee, and implore that blessing without which none can be blest. For with thee is the fountain of life, and under the shadow of thy wings must the children of men put their trust alway.

To thy keeping we commit our souls, all-faithful and loving Creator. This day, and all our days, may thy presence go with us, chastening our joys, comforting us in our sorrows, shielding us in hours of peril, protecting from the power of temptation, sanctifying all labors and all events, and imparting a peace which the outer world cannot give, and cannot take away. Holy Father, this day may the thought of Jesus, thy chosen Messenger and faithful Son, go with us, and his parting promise be fulfilled to each of us—"Lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." Aided and inspired by his example, may we meet firmly all the conflicts and trials of earth ; and be not afraid if ten thousands set themselves against us. By his spirit of faith and fortitude may we be possessed more and more, and go on our way rejoicing, heedless of pain and fearing no evil.

Command thy blessing, O God ! to rest upon us of this household, as we bow down before thee and commit our way to thy hand. And when life's short day is passed, bring us together, a family in heaven, with no wanderer lost, to sit with Jesus Christ in heavenly places. He is our way to thee : and through him, seeing thy face, we ascribe unto thee the glory and the praise forever. Amen.

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## IN THE EVENING,

SAY ;

Thou stretchest out the heavens like a curtain ; the day goeth away and the shadows of the evening are stretched out.

Continue, Oh Lord ! to shew forth thy truth every morning, and thy faithfulness every night.

Thine is a city which hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it :

The gates of it are not shut at all, by day ; and there is no night there : The glory of God doth lighten it—and the Lamb is the light thereof.

I will both lay me down in peace and sleep ; for thou Lord only makest me dwell in safety.

LORD God Almighty, Father of Mercies, God and Father of Jesus Christ our Life : we desire to offer up to thee, before we seek repose, our evening sacrifice of prayer and praise. We thank thee for thy goodness to us during the past day, and we beseech thee to continue to us thy gracious protection during this night. Thou sustainest us and carest for us, though we see thee not. Though we forget thee in our sleep, thou dost watch over us. Whom have we in heaven but thee ? Whom on earth shall we desire beside thee ? Thou art our support in trouble ; our guide in difficulty ; our best consolation in time of sickness ; our only refuge in the hour of death.

Thou knowest our ways and our hearts. Pardon, we beseech thee, whatever evil we have said or thought or done this day. Teach us continually to examine our ways by the light of thy written word, and grant us true repentance and faith in our Lord and Saviour. May we manifest those tempers and abound in those works which his Gospel requires. May we be always full of meekness and patience, of kindness and forbearance, of benevolence and charity ; and, being established in the love of God, may we also love our neighbour with a pure heart.

Infinite Father, let us see, through all the darkness of life, thy clearly shining wisdom and love. Be pleased so to order all things, during the short day or night of our earthly existence, that all trials may issue in our eternal good. We know not what an hour may bring forth, but we will lay us down in peace and sleep, with thine everlasting arm for our pillow. Father, thou knowest all things ; be the strength of our hearts and our portion forever ! Amen.

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## THINKING UPON THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR,

SAY ;

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.

A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

THOU Infinite and only God ; in thy sight a thousand years are but as one day. All things on earth are passing away, but thou art the same forever. By thy providence we are brought to the close of another year. Help us to raise our thoughts above the flight of time to the eternity in which thou dwellest, and to those things which know no change, but from glory to glory.

The departing year in its course, carries hence the hopes and treasures of many hearts. Friends, with whom at its beginning we exchanged affectionate greetings, have disappeared, and their coming steps we shall hear no more. Many who welcomed the opening of the year that is past, with hopes as confident as ours, have left the world and gone, whence they shall not return. Merciful God, open all our hearts to hear thy solemn voice in the flight of time. Thou only knowest how near is the last hour that we shall spend beneath the sun. Let it please thee to bring home to us a sense of our mortality. Teach us so to number our days that we may apply our hearts to heavenly wisdom.

Breathe, O God ! breathe into us a divine life ; the life of Christian faith and hope. Daily, hourly, we will watch and pray, lest we fall into temptation. Help us to form that habit of mind which reads holy lessons in all the changes of life. The past and the future alike point to the infinite value of the present. May every moment be used in Thy sight, as fraught with momentous consequences for our weal or for our woe. Oh ! that it may be given us henceforth to walk worthy of our great calling as men, as children of God, and as disciples of Jesus Christ. Amen.

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## IN TIME OF TROUBLE,

SAY ;

Our of the depths will I cry unto thee O God !

Be our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble :

Eli said, The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

Let Him do what seemeth to Him good, for He doeth all things well.

Jesus said, ' Father, take this cup of suffering from me, - nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt ; Father, Thy will be done !'

God, Almighty and All-merciful ! hear the cry of all who are in affliction. Thou knowest our frame. Thou rememberest that we are dust. O ! Lord our God, in the midst of life's sorrows and trials our strength is in thee. Imaged to us in Christ, our Good Shepherd, we believe that thou Father dost not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men. Aid us, Oh ! aid us, to see in the present trial, and in every time of trouble, the blessing thou wouldst confer ; and so turn affliction into life and joy.

Grant that we be not overmuch bowed down by any burden of sorrow ; nor forget the resignation to thy will, the courage and the faith, that become us, as disciples of Christ, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and died in prayer for all men. With grateful hearts may we recount the blessings we still enjoy ; and, if reminded of happier times in the past, believe that brighter hours will come again. In holy hope, may we look above all trial, to that heavenly world, which awaits the good and true : where there shall be no more sin and no more sorrow ; and where our light affliction, which is but for a moment here, shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Keep, Father, in our view, the Man of sorrows. Help us to follow him in the patience with which he bore afflictions ; in his love that gave back blessing for cursing to them that injured him ; and in the triumphant faith that enabled him to say, ' The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it ?' If we deplore our sufferings, may we not be insensible to the sins that should have brought us severer chastisement. In thy mercy, O God ! forgive them, and strengthen us that we go and sin no more : and thine only be the glory, Father of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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# IN THANKSGIVING,

SAY ;

I will extol thee, my God ; I will bless thy name for ever and ever,  
I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.

Men shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and sing of thy righteousness.

My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, and let all flesh bless his holy name, for ever.

FATHER Almighty, in thee all goodness dwells ; from thee all blessings flow. Laden as we are with thy bounties, be our lips tuned to thy praise. We adore that goodness which glows in the sun, refreshes in the breeze, distils in the fruitful dew, descends in copious showers, smiles on us by day, and watches over us by night. Infinite Father, if we speak of thy mercies, they are more than we can number. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so pant our souls after thee O God ! When we taste and see how good thou art, our heart and flesh cry out for the living God with longings that cannot be uttered.

Guardian of all, we thank thee for thy loving care of the family into which we have been born. Blessed be thy name for the tie which binds us to one another, and for that Holy Love which, coming from heaven, gives a joy, not of earth, to our family affections. Happily we sit under our own vines and in the shelter of our own dwellings. We thank thee, Infinite One, for the good influences of all sound teaching ; for salutary lessons received from pious and good men ; for all the benefits of reading, conversation and experience ; and above all else, for the Gospel of thy Son Jesus Christ, with its immortal hopes.

Bountiful Supporter of the world's great family, let it please thee to continue to us thy blessings, and give us increase of wisdom and fidelity to improve them aright. Let not prosperity destroy us, nor thy gifts be made to nourish pride and presumption, intemperance and lust, idleness and self-adulation. Dispose us to a grateful and prudent use of thy bounties, and may we only value temporal good in its relation to eternity. May our minds and hearts be rich toward thee ; hourly laying up treasure in heaven ; as we are taught by thy Holy Child Jesus : and thine only be the glory, God over all, blessed for ever ! Amen.

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# HAPPY IN THE NEW YEAR,

SAY ;

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want ;  
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ; he leadeth me beside  
the still waters !

He restoreth my soul ; he leadeth me in paths of righteousness for  
his name's sake.

Thou anointest my head with oil ; my cup runneth over ;

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life ;  
and I will dwell in the home of the Lord, for ever.

God, thou art good. We, thy children, meet thee  
in the opening of a new year, and seek thy benediction  
with anthems and alleluias. We come to thee with  
songs and everlasting joy upon our heads. In the  
mild glory of thy gentle presence we consecrate our-  
selves renewedly to thy service. Let the year prove  
a rich blessing to us all, in our causing it, with thy  
help, to bring us new thoughts and pure ; and new reso-  
lutions, to be better kept than any that have gone  
before. Thrice happy will it be to us, if in it, we be  
led into just and godly living.

Merciful Father, help thou our insensibility and  
unbelief. And now, as another year opens upon us,  
renew us in the whole temper of our minds. Give  
us strength, in Christ, to make all things new and pure  
in our hearts and ways : to break off every evil  
habit, and set out on a new journey, towards heaven.  
Although this year should strip us of our dearest  
earthly possessions, it will make us rich indeed, and its  
memory will be precious for ever, if it give us fresh  
wisdom and strength from on high. We know that  
true peace can only come of righteousness, and of  
making thy just will, our will.

If we be walking in a vain show, ruled by the fear  
or favor of a foolish world, deliver us, we beseech thee  
from this evil, and try us not with this temptation any  
more. Give us, not the spirit of vanity or fear, but of  
love, and of power, and of a sound mind. Give us  
strength to become new creatures, alive for ever to God  
and the truth. May every coming year, every day, bear  
witness to our growing faith and hope and love. Lead  
us, Only God, in the way of Christ, our new com-  
mandment and comforter, our Brother and Saviour.  
Amen.

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| ration and publication     | ...         |
| Prayer and Praise          | ...         |
| sta"; (2.) At the cl       | ...         |
| request, a discourse       | ...         |
| st," or Christianity       | ...         |
| ) In October, a tra        | ...         |
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| sing with the Mid          | ...         |
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| ... 594 0 0                               |
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| scription from October to December, 1855. |
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| Balance, ... 250 2 3                      |
| Company's Rupees, 1366 2 3                |

|                          |
|--------------------------|
| ... 19th January, 1856.  |
| Donations.               |
| ... Chand Mittra, ... 5. |
| ... 4                    |
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Press, by J. Baptist.

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